

# **DAYANANDA THE GREAT**

Ved Mitra



**ARYA SAMAJ - BHARUCH**

## Author



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(1915-1999)

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## Dayānanda - The Great

### Preamble

In this small booklet, a sincere effort is made to present Maharshi Swāmī Dayānanda Saraswatī (1825-1883) in his original form.

No emotions, no feelings, no sensations, and no exaggerations at all.

Rigid and austere as he was, with the same rigidity and austerity, this booklet has been brought about.

Readers, here, will find a true picture of Dayānanda - the great spiritual hero of his days.

Dayānanda believed in the Vedas and the Vedas alone. He made the Vedas, the anchor-sheet of his life, upon which he stood adamantine like a rock and cracked and crushed anything and everything that came in his way, while preaching the superb and sublime wisdom of the Vedas. He was always victorious and glorious and never defeated. He roared like a lion the mighty philosophical uproars of the Vedas and Vedic literature.

Pundits, Prophets and Popes of India were startled. They all came to meet him half way but all were smashed to the level, one after another without any exception whatsoever. He, with his sparkling talents and unbeaten genius, beautifully blended with bold understanding and gigantic

will-force, came out with flying colors, with the grace of a mighty champion. A formidable aggression, from different scholars of the different branches of the different sects, followed him day and night. From dawn to dusk he was busy discussing, preaching, talking, and arguing with these scholars. No scholar ever defeated him.

Why? Why Dayānanda was always successful? This is the question. Here goes the answer:

**Dayānanda was successful because his was the voice of the Vedas. His was the vision of the Vedas. His was the eye of the Vedas. His was the thought of the Vedas.**

He never believed in dogmas and dogmatism, just like other sectarian Achāryas - Shankara, Rāmānuja, Madhva and Vallabha etc. These sectarian Achāryas preached their own individual thoughts and emotions in the name of religion and philosophy. And, as such they have polluted and desecrated the entire range of the Vedic literature.

It was the eye of Dayānanda that perceived this particular mischief played by these Achāryas and declared aloud from the top of his voice that the Vedas are quite free from dogmas and dogmatism. The Vedas are the Divine revelation unto humanity by Almighty God, whose name be exalted and whose perfection be extolled.

My most beloved readers! Here in India or abroad! I would like to impress upon you that the most outstanding feature of Dayānanda was that he never believed in any sort of mental creations,

human imaginations and individual thoughts. He never advocated his own ways and means. **This is the secret of his grand success.** He believed in the Vedas and he preached the wisdom of the Vedas alone. No mixture at all. No hotchpotch at all.

His works are, therefore, free from personal emotions, individual thoughts and ideology. His works are solid, substantial, soul-stirring, intellectual, logical and at once scientific. Study his monumental treatise '*Satyārtha-Prakāsha*' (*The Light of Truth*) and believe me, you will be altogether a changed being.

In order to understand Hinduism in its entirety you have got to understand Dayānanda. Without understanding Dayānanda, you cannot understand the Hindu religion, culture and philosophy, if at all you take seven births in this world. Why?

Because Dayānanda alone has thrown flood-light on all aspects of Hindu religion and philosophy. He first gave us the true vision about the Vedas as the base of Hinduism.

No other Achāryas have done so, so far. This is all I have to say. And therefore,

**Glory! Glory! To Dayānanda Mahārāja.**

**Hail! Hail! To Dayānanda Mahārāja.**

**The great world preacher!**

Chapter - I

## Dayānanda – AS A SCHOLAR

Dayānanda as a scholar was greater than the greatest of the all scholars born on the face of the globe, during the last five thousand years. He possessed all the knowledge of all the branches of the Vedas and the Vedic literature. He was a mighty good all-rounder of social, spiritual, religious, political and *yogic* knowledge. There was no branch in the vast Vedic literature, which he left untouched. He studied more than three thousand Sanskrit books right from Brahmā down to Jaimini i.e. from Rigveda upto Pūrva-Mīmānsā. This statement was made by Dayānanda himself in his small book 'Bhrānti Nivārana'. When I read this, at once the words slipped out of my heart:

What a volcanic personality he was!

What a wonderful figure he was!

His tremendous study was not one sided. His study shines out without a shadow of doubt, as comparative and critical, logical and scientific. As a thinker, he classified the truth in three parts: (i) The partial truth (ii) The half truth and (iii) The whole truth.

He neither accepted the partial truth nor the half truth. He always accepted the whole truth which he found in the glorious Vedas. He loudly lamented the luck of Shankara, Rāmānuja and Vallabha, as they had no insight in the four Vedas. They mistook Upanishads as the Vedas. In the literature compiled by them, they have given Upanishadic quotations in place of Vedic quotations, where ever it was necessary for them to do. This proves that these scholars were unconscious of the Vedas. Their knowledge was limited up to the Gītā Upanishads and Vedānta-Darshana.

It was only Dayānanda who perceived this blunder committed by the above scholars and defied them. Dayānanda strongly and ruthlessly criticized the dogma of 'pure monism' or '*Adwaita-vāda*' preached by Shankarāchārya and proved very well indeed the futility of it. Dayānanda truthfully criticized almost all "isms" that were against the

Vedas, because he, after many years of deep-concentration for hours together daily, came to the rational conclusion that the Vedas are not at all the creation of any human mind; Vedas are not at all the reflection of any human brain; but they are revelation by Almighty God – The Supreme Self. And so, Dayānanda proclaimed from the house-top that no sectarian scripture can claim itself to be the revelation except the Vedas. The Vedas can alone enjoy that supreme position.

Now, here arises a question as to why the Vedas are revelation and no other sectarian scripture of the world?

Here, too, Dayānanda's view is quite clear and logical. Dayānanda says: The Vedas are an encyclopedia of all knowledge. The root principles of all the sciences or of all the branches of knowledge are embedded in the Vedas alone. There are different kinds of learnings just as science of mathematics, science of astronomy, science of cosmology, science of geology, science of medicine, science of anatomy, science of music, science of zoology, science of botany, etc.

Can you show the above learnings in the Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata or Bhāgawata? Can you show the above learnings in the Purāns, Quran or Bible? The answer remains simply in negative.

This is the reason why Dayānanda, with all the emphasis at his command, declared the Vedas as the only revelation and no other scripture of the world. The fact that all the learnings are found in the Vedas, is also proved by many unprejudiced modern scholars and scientists. India – '*the land of the Vedas*' is therefore recognized as '*the cradle of religion and science*'. When, once, it is proved that the Vedas are revelation, then, it is also automatically proved that the Vedic religion is the universal religion.

And, when Vedic religion is the universal religion, then anything and everything against the Vedas, is wrong.

**This was the grip of Dayānanda.**

**This was the hold of Dayānanda.**

**This was the tone of Dayānanda.**

He, further, asserts:

Any man, from any part of the world and however great he may be, is apt to be imperfect because the very nature of the human soul is knowledge-limited. And, therefore, sanction from the Vedas becomes indispensable. No statement can ever be true without the holy sanction of the Vedas. Man is always imperfect and fallible and Vedas are always perfect and infallible as they are the Knowledge-Divine.

Hence, not only India but the whole world is indebted to Dayānanda as he was the only eye-opener of the whole world.

And that is why the great Sri Aurobindo, giving tribute to Dayānanda in his masterly fashion writes:

"Very different was the manner of working of Dayānanda. Here was one who did not infuse himself informally into the indeterminate soul of things, but stamped his figure indelibly as in bronze on men and things. Here was one whose formal works are the very children of his spiritual body, children fair and robust and full of vitality, the image of their creator. Here was one who knew definitely and clearly the work he was sent to do, chose his materials, determined his conditions with a sovereign clairvoyance of the spirit and executed his conception with the puissant mastery of the born worker. As I regard the figure of this formidable artisan in God's workshop, images crowd on me which are all of battle and work and conquest and triumphant labour. Here, I say to myself, was a very soldier of Light, a warrior in God's world, a sculptor of men and institutions, a bold and rugged victor of the difficulties which matter presents to spirit. And the whole sums itself up to me in a powerful impression of spiritual practicality. The combination of these two words, usually so divorced from each other in our conceptions, seems to me the very definition of Dayānanda." (*'Bankim-Tilak-Dayānanda'*, p. 42)

And this is the reason why the author of this booklet calls Dayānanda greater than the greatest of all scholars born on the face of the globe subsequent to Mahābhārata period.

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## Chapter - II

### Dayānanda – AS A PREACHER

Dayānanda as a preacher can be placed in a class by himself. There is no class for him. There is no parallel for him.

It was for the first time in the history of India that Dayānanda raised his mighty voice against idol-worship which was deeply rooted in Hindu flesh, blood and bone. Idol-worship was supposed to be the part and parcel of Hinduism. No body dared to go against idol-worship. It was Dayānanda who clearly perceived the futility of idol-worship as he did not at all find the trace of it in the sublime Vedas. He did not find even a small of idol-worship in the Vedas. The Vedas contain more than twenty thousand verses. There is not a single verse that can support the view point of idol-worship. On the contrary, the Vedas proclaim: "The formless Supreme Spirit that pervades the universe can have no material representation, likeness or image." (*'Na tasya pratimā asti...'* – *Yajur Veda*: 32.3). And as such Dayānanda made full blooded attack on idol-worship. He boldly challenged all *Paurānic* (orthodox) Pandits to enter into debate with him, so far as the question of idol-worship was concerned.

He roared and said: Either you have to show idol-worship in the Vedas or you have to give it up entirely. The voice came like a heavy bombardment. All Pandits were startled and stunned, right from Kashmir to Kanyakumāri. They all came to hold debate (*Shāstrārtha*) with him, but no scholar was successful to prove idol-worship from the Vedas. When highly reputed and famous scholars were defeated smashingly by Dayānanda, intelligent people were greatly influenced and highly convinced. They felt the uselessness of idol-worship. A piece of stone, however beautiful it may be, always remains a piece of stone. It cannot be the object of our worship, just like the Tāj Mahal which is unconscious of the admirations offered to it.

Dayānanda toured from one part of India to another and preached the Hindus directly to drive off idol-worship from their life, land and soil.

Dayānanda's constant and incessant preaching against idol-worship brought about a revolutionary change in the minds of Hindus. It was an era of radical change for them. It was an era of the conflict between thoughts and emotions. Thoughts overtook emotions. Many intelligent Hindus lost their faith in idol-worship. They began to throw the idols in the waters of Gangā and Yamunā.

Thus, the great Dayānanda was successful in his campaign against idol-worship to a very great extent.

He, therefore, rendered a matchless service to entire Hinduism, making it free from the dirty clutches of idol-worship which was undoubtedly a later production. Idol-worship was not at all seen in Hindu religion right up to the time of Srī Krishna. It entered the threshold of Hinduism since the time of Mahāvira Swāmī. It is therefore impossible for any wise man to prove idol-worship in Hinduism before the period of Mahāvira Swāmī is a solid evidence to this fact. Hence, idol-worship is a later production. And it is cleverly added into Hinduism by selfish scholars to earn their livelihood.

Towards the close of this subject it reminds me of that great impartial and celebrated writer of Bengal, Pandit Devendranāth Mukhopādhyāya, who in his most inspiring language writes:

"May you be the chief justice of the supreme court; may you be the Prime Minister of Governor General; may you be greater than Brihaspati in intelligence; may you be greater than Cicero and Goethe in oration; may you be worshiped here in India or Abroad; may you be a shining jewel of Attorney clan; may you be a lawyer, barrister or advocate, may the bugle of your name and fame be blowing far and wide, but if you support the view point of idol-worship in any fraction of it, I have no hesitation in saying that you are not the friend but the foe of India because idol-worship is the root of all evils that are prevalent in India." (*'Hindi biography of Maharshi Dayānanda'*, p. 27)

My most beloved readers! Think impartially and decide intellectually.

Another full blooded attack that Dayānanda made was on *Sākāra-vāda* (a misconception of assuming different incarnations of God). God is described Omnipresent and Formless in the Vedas:

"That All-pervading Reality (God) is free from any sort of body – the gross body, the subtle body and the causal body. He never comes in the womb of a mother. He is full Effulgent, Self-existent and Omniscient." (*'Sa paryagāt ...'* – *Yajur Veda*: 40.8)

"He is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent. He is the support of the earth, the heaven, the sun, the moon, the vast atmosphere and the entire universe." (*'Sambho dādhār...'* and *'Yah shramāt tapaso...'* – *Atharva Veda*: 10.7.35-36)

The fundamental point raised by Dayānanda is most remarkable here. Dayānanda says: When God is Omnipotent (*Sarva-shaktimāna*) and support of all (*Sarvādhāra*), how can he require support from any body or any thing? If you say, He requires support from any body, then, He ceases to be Omnipotent and All-supporting. If you say, He does not require any support from any body, then He is proved Formless as he does not require the support of any physical body.

Thus, Dayānanda the great has blown off the mighty fortress of so-called 'Incarnation' or *Sākāra-vāda* with one master stroke.

He, therefore, preached aloud that Srī Rāma and Srī Krishna were neither God nor the incarnations of God. Rāma and Krishna were great persons. They were individual souls. They can not be compared with Almighty God – The Omnipresent, All-pervading Supreme Self, the One without the second. Therefore, to worship Rāma and Krishna etc. as God is a philosophical and spiritual mistake. No soul, however great he may be, can ever take the place of God because the soul is always possessed of finite knowledge and God is All-knowledge and Knowledge-Absolute. Can any soul however realized he may be create the world? Can he create the sun, the moon, the earth and stars? No. Why, then, all these absurd argumentations about Rāma and Krishna as God? Soul always remains soul and God always remains God.

Thus, Dayānanda brought back in Hinduism, its primitive element and glory. This is the reason why Dayānanda can be placed in a class by himself.

## Dayānanda - AS A PHILOSOPHER

Dayānanda as a philosopher was the only one without the second. His name will remain immortal and his position undisputed till the cosmic-dissolution (*pralaya*) because **he talked the very basis of philosophy**. The basis of philosophy is the three eternal elements: God, Matter and Soul. And so, his philosophy straight way starts with these three eternal elements. He says, if you properly understand the nature and attributes of these three eternals no philosopher can entangle you in his clutches of wrong philosophy. He describes God, Soul and Matter in the following manner:

**Nature and attributes of God:** God is '*Sachchidānanda*' means Existence-Absolute, Knowledge-Absolute and Bliss-Absolute. He is bodiless, birthless and deathless. He is All-pervading and All-supporting. He is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent. He is the creator, sustainer and dissolver of the universe. He is *Nirākāra* - Formless and the Creator of this universe.

**Nature and attributes of Soul:** The Soul is possessed of finite knowledge. He is having desire, aversion, volition, pleasure and pain. He comes in birth and death. He is enjoyer of the fruits of his actions.

**Nature and attributes of matter (*Prakriti*):** Matter is inanimate. It is lifeless, thoughtless and knowledgeless. It is a collection of *Sattva*, *Raja* and *Tama*.

From the above statements it is quite clear that these elements have different nature and different attributes. And as such they have separate existence. The soul is different from God and God is different from the soul. The soul can not become God under any circumstances whatsoever.

Now, how we to believe the statement of Shankarāchārya who says that the soul is God and none other? It is an absurd solution and as such it cannot be accepted. There is no room for Monism (*Advaitavāda*) in the Vedas. In the Vedas we see Trinism ('*Trita-Vāda*') of God,

### Soul and Matter.

It was Dayānanda who put forth this idea of the three eternals, having different qualities, for the first time in the history of the world after the age of Mahābhārata.

You have got to understand these three eternals to have comparative and critical knowledge of different philosophies of the world, and to come to the right conclusions about those philosophies which are shining in structure but shallow in substance.

Thus, Dayānanda very precisely and at the same time quite correctly opened the vast realms of philosophy in a basic form for the impartial thinkers to think upon. And this is the reason why Dayānanda will always command greater respect than usual from all quarters of philosophy and from all students of philosophy also.

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*"The world is fettered by the chain forged by superstitions and ignorance. I have come to snap asunder that chain and to set slaves at liberty. It is contrary to my mission to have people deprived of their freedom."*

*"Though I am born in Āryāvarta (India) and live in it, yet just as I do not defend the falsehood of the faiths and religions of this country, but expose them fully; in like manner I deal with the religions of other countries. I treat the foreigners in the same way as my own countrymen, so far as the elevation of the human race is concerned."*

*"Therefore, the purpose of my life is the extirpation of evils; introduction of truth in thought, speech, and deed; the preservation of unity of religion; the expulsion of mutual enmity; the extension of friendly intercourse; and the advancement of public happiness by reciprocal subservience of the human family. May the grace of the Almighty God and the consent and co-operation of the learned soon spread these doctrines all over the world to facilitate everybody's endeavor in the advancement of virtue, wealth, legitimate pleasure, and salvation, so that peace, prosperity and happiness may ever reign in the world."*

#### Chapter-IV

## Dayānanda – AS A BUILDER OF NATION

Dayānanda as a builder of nation was simply majestic, at once magnanimous and magnificent. The earlier preachers like Shankara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vallabha, Kabira, Nānaka and modern teachers like Vivekānanda, Rāmatīrtha and others talked tall and gossiped high about Ātmā, Paramātmā and Māyā etc. But they never uttered a single word about the unity of the nation. It was Dayānanda who first of all realized the importance of unity among Hindus. At the time he came in the field of actual work, he saw Hindus divided into so many creeds, sects, methods of worship and gods and goddesses.

Dayānanda, therefore, thought very seriously about this particular weakness of the Hindu community and made up his mind to unite all the Hindus in one common string, because unity is a prerequisite to build up a nation. Without unity the task of building up a nation is impossible. And the unity was only possible if **there be one God, one religion, one scripture, one caste, one method of worship and one language.**

Dayānanda, therefore, devised a six-fold scheme and preached it to Hindu community right up to the very close of his valuable life. That six-fold scheme is this:

Oh, Hindus!

- You have only one **God** and that is '**Om**' (or '**Aum**').
- You have only one **religion** and that is the '**Vedic religion**'.
- You have only one **scripture** and that is the '**Veda**'.
- You have only one **caste** and that is '**Ārya**'.
- You have only one **method of worship** and that is '**Sandhyā**'.
- You have only one **language** and that is '**Hindi**'.

Thus, Dayānanda first of all placed this most practical scheme before

the mass and the class. And as such, Dayānanda can rightly be called the father, nay the grandfather of the builders of nation in India. His was the eye of realism rather than idealism. Idealist does not at all help to build up a nation. Hindus today are fallen, disunited, weak and more dead than alive because they have not yet accepted this six-fold scheme of Dayānanda. But, today or tomorrow, Hindus shall have to accept this path, if at all they want to rise once again. There is no way other than this. The more delay they cause, the heavier price they shall have to pay for it.

Let us now complete this booklet in the words of that great international fame, Sri Aurobindo, who about Dayānanda says:

"May his (Dayānanda's) spirit act in India pure, unspoilt, unmodified and help to give us back that of which our life stands especially in need, pure energy, high clearness, the penetrating eye, the masterful hand, the noble and dominant sincerity." ('Bankim-Tilak-Dayānanda', p. 46)

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## Dayānanda – a social reformer with a crusading zeal

– Dr. S. Rādhākrishnan

"Among the makers of modern India, the chief place will be assigned to him (Dayānanda). At a time when there was spiritual confusion in our country, when many of our social practices were in the melting pot, when we were overcome by superstition and obscurantism, this great soul came forward with staunch devotion to truth and a passion for social equality and enthusiasm, and worked for the emancipation of our country, religious, political, social and cultural... Swami Dayānanda Sarasvatī was one who was guided by the supremacy of reason and he made out that the Vedic scriptures never asked us to take anything on trust but to examine everything, and then come to any kind of conclusion.... So he (Dayānanda) was a social reformer who had a crusading zeal, a powerful intellect and a fire in his heart when he looked at the social injustices. He tried to sweep them away with a drastic hand. This is also what the country requires today... In that way he emphasized the rule of reason and pointed out that there is one Supreme God. He also gave freedom of conscience."

(Source: "President Rādhākrishnan's Speeches and Writings", May 1962-May 1964, p. 126-128, Speech at Bodha-Utsava of Swāmī Dayānanda Sarasvatī, N.Delhi, 24.2.1963)

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## Dayānanda's Clarion Call

"Our brothers, the Shāstries (priests and religious teachers & leaders) are stubborn. This is indeed a great curse for all of us. Many of the teachings and practices of the Vedas no longer exist in our country Bharat-khanda. And whatever a little that remains is dying out due to lack of interest from our part and also due to blind faiths and evil practices. Superstitions are spreading unchecked. We are moving away from right conduct and truth and this is the main cause of our misfortune and miseries. We have neglected the Vedas and the books composed by the Rishis. Instead we have sunk deep into the Purānas and we have accepted their imaginary and unreal tales to be our dharma. If someone will ask me - is there any solution to this madness? I will say - Yes, there is and with the blessings of God this disease can be cured. We have to translate the ancient scriptures like the Vedas and the six Darshanas (the six systems of Vedic philosophy) in different languages, so that all people can easily get acquainted with the ancient wisdom. The educated persons shall have to assume some responsibilities and come forward to preach the right knowledge about dharma. Ārya Samāj should be established in each and every village and effort should be made to stop evil practices like idol-worship. At the same time, the practice of brahmacharya should be encouraged and the people of the different varnas and āshramas should work diligently to increase their physical and spiritual strength. Thus, the ignorant mass will easily come to know, that is, their eyes will be able to see the right picture of dharma and the desperate plight in which we are can be destroyed and the right dharma may be established on this earth again. One person like me, with all his weaknesses and shortcomings cannot do all these alone. That is why, I have many expectations from the learned persons and I hope that they will join hands with me in this endeavor and provide help honestly. Om! Shāntih Shāntih Shāntih!"

(This is a part of the lecture delivered by Maharshi Dayānanda at Pune on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1875. Source: "Sermons delivered by Maharshi Dayānanda Sarasvati", p. 190-191)

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Ved Mitra



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