



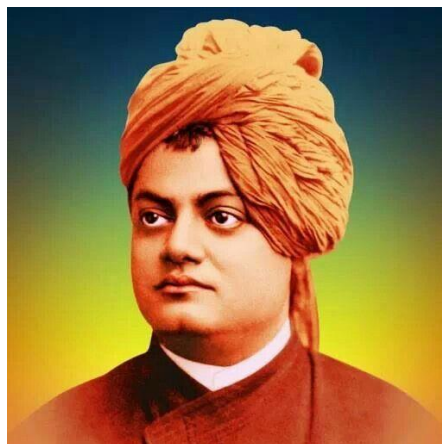
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Swami Vivekananda: A Global Leader

Introduction:

Swami Vivekananda is a world teacher, his vision has encompassed the spiritual uplift of humanity as a whole, yet he is also one of the greatest leaders of modern India. Swami Vivekananda, born as Narendranath Datta, had an interesting and spiritually influenced childhood.

He was born on December 12, 1863 in Kolkata. His father, Vishwanath Datta, was a lawyer, and his mother, Bhuvaneshwari Devi, was a devout housewife. Narendranath's family had a spiritual and intellectual atmosphere. His parents were devout followers of the Hindu traditions, and their home often hosted discussions on various religious and philosophical topics. This early exposure to spirituality had a significant impact on the young Narendranath. Since childhood, he has been a voracious reader and was keen to know about everything that he witnessed in his surroundings, including himself.



Swami Vivekananda pursued his higher education at the Presidency College in Kolkata. He excelled in both academic and extracurricular activities, displaying a brilliant mind and an ability to engage in profound discussions on philosophy and literature. His education included both Western and Vedic studies. Even as a child, he exhibited an introspective nature, and he had moments of deep meditation and spiritual experiences, foreshadowing his later life as a monk and spiritual leader.

Swami Vivekananda's Views:

Swami Vivekananda was a lover of socialism, but he wanted its basis to be the spiritual unity of existence. He wanted a revolution in society, but it was not his wish that it should be violent or take the form of a revolution; rather, its foundation should be mutual love and accurate knowledge of one's culture. He didn't want us to copy the western culture blindly, Instead, he desired for our spirituality and culture to make us well-known. He was of the point of view that, India's great spiritual idealism combined with Western concepts of social progress, is a need for us.

The caste system, according to Vivekananda, had strayed from its intended use and was now a cause of social inequality. Vivekananda spoke out against the discrimination that members of lower castes endured as well as the evil practice of untouchability.

Swami Vivekananda states, the caste system has always been incredibly flexible, sometimes providing a clear path forward for even the lowest castes to advance in the hierarchy of human societies. This proves that, at least from the point of view of principles, entire India was led not just by money or sword, but also by wisdom, purified and controlled by spirituality. He says, pulling down the upper castes wont help, instead encouraging and providing education to the lower castes will solve this problem of untouchability.

The basis of caste is quality, clear evidence of this is found in Bhishma Parva of Mahabharata and in the narratives of Python and Uma-Maheshwar. Every individual is the centre of manifestation of a specific power. This power has been accumulated as a result of our past actions, and each of us is born carrying this power with us. This great truth, which Lord Shri Krishna attempted to explain in the Geeta, is the foundation for the Hindu religion's Varnashram practice, the concept of Swadharma, etc. I acknowledge that caste based on merit is important, but it is disheartening to note that within two or three generations, caste is determined by birth rather than merit. Thus, the religious aspect of our national identity has suffered a setback.

He states that, people belonging to any caste shouldn't be judged by the occupation they perform. If a person possesses qualities of a brahmin or Shudra, he or she shouldn't be looked down on. Consider watching someone perform various tasks like cleaning, teaching or fighting, etc are occupations that aren't assigned to a particular caste or a person, like for example ; He is a Shudra when he is working for the welfare of society; He exhibits the traits of a Kshatriya when he is fighting for the betterment of our nation; he is a Vaishya when he is engaging in any business for his gain; And when he spends his time studying Vedic texts and spreads knowledge about them, then he is a Brahmin. Therefore, it is clear that it is absolutely possible to shift from one caste to another, as people do keep changing their tasks or occupations. Otherwise, how did Vishwamitra become a Brahmin and Parashurama a Kshatriya?

Swami Vivekananda, tries to explain that if we vanish this birth assigned caste-based discrimination from our society and understand that we all are one and what matters is humanity. Also understanding our great culture and taking knowledge of our great texts will bring Indians together and our nation can never decline.

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