

themselves for the work of enlightening the world with the perennial wisdom of the Rishis, concerning the fundamental problems of human existence. In the past, India never failed to give the world, without stint, its much needed spiritual succour by throwing open her invaluable cultural treasure consisting of all that is noblest and best in human civilization. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'This is the land from whence, like the tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again rushed out and deluged the world, and this is the land from whence once more such tides must proceed in order to bring life and vigour into the decaying races of mankind'. This is the task before the nation. And if the people of India are to

become the real representatives of the Spirit of their motherland, of her Soul, then they should recognize, preserve, and cherish those ancient, tested spiritual ideals and values that treasure the immense religious fervour and the age-long quest after God which form, as it were, the delicate thread that runs through and gracefully binds the entire culture and civilization of the people.

Today the war-weary world is again looking to India, urgently wanting her soothing message of love, peace, and harmony. The world is eagerly waiting for it. And, once again, India, true to her life's mission, should come forward and unequivocally proclaim the Reality behind all existence, seen and unseen, and the call of the spiritual life.

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## THE MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO THE MODERN WORLD

BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

Swami Vivekananda's earthly life covered the short span of thirty-nine years. Of these, he spent some of the most creative in America. His message to the Western World, embodying India's spiritual heritage, was given in the United States. And America's appreciation of the Swami helped to a great extent to make his teachings effective in his own motherland. His memory is enshrined in the hearts of many Americans who either knew him personally or had read his teachings. A major part of the foreign work of the Ramakrishna Mission, which he founded, is being carried on in America. All this has been helping to create a warm Indo-American cultural friendship, whose far-reaching effect will become more manifest as the smoke and dust of the present settle down.

It was the finger of God that guided the young Swami Vivekananda to the distant shores of America. His teacher, Sri Ramakrishna, had many years before admonished him

to see God both with eyes closed and with eyes open. From him the disciple learned that to serve God in the form of the poor, the sick, and the ignorant is as effective a way of communing with God as contemplation or ceremonial worship. Thereupon he took the vow of dedicating his life to the realization of God and the service of humanity. To feel the presence of God within oneself and then to serve man as the embodiment of the Godhead is the time-honoured teaching of Hinduism.

During his life as a wandering monk in India, Swami Vivekananda discovered both the secret of India's past greatness and that of her future regeneration. Loyalty to the spiritual truths of their forefathers, he found, had preserved the culture of the Hindus for centuries in spite of many aggressions from outside. The dynamic religion of the Hindus has made it possible for them to assimilate into their society many foreign elements. Renunciation and service have always been India's

national ideals, and she had spread her influence beyond her borders not through the power of the sword but through the power of the spirit. Spirituality, the Swami was convinced, still formed the backbone of India's national life. He realized that if India neglected her spiritual ideals, she would meet with dire consequences. Her future contribution to the world would be made in the realm of spirituality.

The second secret he learned was that the cause of India's present backwardness was the poverty and illiteracy of the masses. Because she had neglected the study of the laws of Nature, she had fallen behind the Western countries in the material amenities of life. This defect, the Swami felt, could be remedied only through the knowledge of science and technology, which she must learn from the West. India and the West must share with each other their respective heritages: the knowledge of the spirit and the knowledge of matter. Both were indispensable for the fullest manifestation of the divine potentialities of man and the creation of a happy world.

In the year 1893 America was celebrating the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus. The actual purpose of the Columbian Exposition was to demonstrate the progress made in the West through the development of the physical sciences. A Parliament of Religions was included in the programme. Swami Vivekananda, then a young monk barely thirty years old, arrived in America to represent Hinduism. The impression he created in Chicago, his subsequent propagation of the Hindu faith throughout the country, and the inauguration of the Vedanta Movement in America—all this has now become part of history. America, with her spiritual traditions, welcomed the universality and rationality of the Swami's message. A spiritual bridge was thus created connecting the newest civilization with one of the oldest.

The teachings of Swami Vivekananda have both national and international import. To India he gave back her confidence in her

ancient spiritual culture and in her future destiny. He earned respect and sympathy for her in the West. And at the same time he spurred on his countrymen to rejuvenate themselves by the knowledge of science, and to make their own unique contribution for the realization of human peace and welfare.

To the world at large, he preached the divinity of the soul, the harmony of religions, and the unity of existence. Every soul, he reiterated, is potentially divine, the goal of religion being to bring out this divinity. The highest God to worship, he declared, is the human soul, and the human body is the greatest temple. God in man reveals Himself when man rids himself of his false attachment and crushes the promptings of the selfish ego. The spirit in man is one with the Spirit behind the universe.

Religion, the Swami taught, is the means to attain God-consciousness. Each religion is an authentic path to reach the same goal. Different religions are necessary to suit diverse tastes and temperaments. People quarrel about religion because they emphasize rituals, myths, and secondary details, and neglect the essential philosophy. Man, the Swami said, does not proceed from error to truth, but from truth to truth—from truth that is lower to truth that is higher. The salvation of the Hindus, the Christians, the Muslims and the Jews lies in unswerving devotion to their own faiths. But this, he insisted, does not preclude the necessity of enriching one's own religious consciousness by learning spiritual truths from other faiths. Mutual respect should be the relationship between one religion and another. When a man realizes truth, he sees the essential oneness of all religions. Science, art, music, and philosophy, like religion, are all vistas that open on the horizon of infinity.

Swami Vivekananda taught that ultimate Reality is one without a second. He pointed out that the knowledge of this oneness creates human solidarity. It is the metaphysical basis of morality and human relationships, and the spiritual foundation of democracy and human rights. The relative manifestations of that

Reality are not unreal, whatever may be their ultimate value. They are often compared, in the Vedas, with the sparks from a fire, the waves in the ocean, or the separate notes of a flute. Unity in diversity is the law of the relative universe. Nature abhors dull uniformity. Thus all the achievements of men in the fields of religion, art, philosophy, or science are to be respected. A true world civilization will be an orchestrated unity in which the different notes all serve to emphasize the divine nature of man and his essential oneness with the universe.

As the neglect of material values had brought about the backwardness of Hindu society, indifference to spiritual values, Swami Vivekananda sternly warned, was sure to bring about the disintegration of the West. He realized that no enduring culture can be built on a purely materialistic foundation, no satisfactory human relationship can be established through expediency, whether political or of any other kind.

The Swami considered the separation between science, religion, and philosophy to be a great tragedy. He declared that since all three are bearers of important truths, their achievements should be integrated. That this can be done is made abundantly clear from the teachings of the Swami. He desired that religion should follow the scientific method of reason and experience, and he wanted the knowledge and power derived from the investigation of Nature to be used for ethical and human purposes.

America is fast becoming the custodian of the great Western culture which had its origin in Greece and Rome. India is the soul of Asia. The one emphasizes the Absolute and the other the outer manifestations. The one prizes contemplation and the other activity. Swami Vivekananda has taught us that both ideals and both methods can be combined for world peace and the liberation of the human spirit.

## THE MYSTERY BEYOND TIME AND SPACE

BY SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

### DISCOURSE OF AN ANCIENT SAGE

In ancient days there was a wise householder named Yajnavalkya who had attained to the highest knowledge. His wife also was devoted to the spiritual ideal. The time came for this sage to renounce the world, so he called his wife to him and said: 'My dear, I am resolved to begin a life of renunciation. I propose, therefore, to hand over all my property to you.' The wife replied: 'My lord, if I possess all your wealth, shall I also attain immortality?' The sage replied: 'No, your life would be that of the rich, and none can possibly hope to gain immortality through wealth'. 'What need have I of wealth?', the wife answered, 'I would rather

learn about the way to immortality'. In his reply, the sage delivered a famous instruction: 'Dear to me you have always been, Maitreyi, and the time has now come for me to reveal to you that truth which is nearest my heart. Come, sit beside me, and I will explain it to you: It is not for the sake of the husband, my beloved, that the husband is dear, but for the sake of the Self. It is not for the sake of the wife, my beloved, that the wife is dear, but for the sake of the Self. It is not for the sake of the children, my beloved, that the children are dear, but for the sake of the Self. It is not for the sake of the creatures, my beloved, that the creatures are dear, but for the sake of the Self. The Self is to be known. Hear about it, reflect upon it, meditate upon