

**MOTIVATING YOUTH : THE THOUGHTS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA****\*\*SUPARNA SHARMA**

Youth is the future of a nation, the sapling which will bear fruit in time, and a hope that future will be bright. Any nation that, wants to progress has to focus on its youth. If the youth is shown the way on how to work together and believe in themselves, then rest assured a bright and prosperous future awaits us. Swami Vivekananda while addressing the youth says “My hope and faith rest in men like you. Understand apply yourselves to work in their light .... I have given you advice enough; now put at least something in practice. Let the world see that your listening to me has been a success (VII. 175)

**Motivating Youth on patriotism**

Swami Vivekananda asks the youth to take pride justly in being Indians, he uses the title of mother for India, an epitome of all nobility, morality and spirituality. He mentions the high place being held by India in the world, and says that the world owes a great debt to India. He says India and Indians are known for their national ideals that are Renunciation and Service.

“Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all moral perfection will be extinct, all sweet soul sympathy for religion will be extinct, all ideality will be extinct; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest; fraud, force, and competition its ceremonies; and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be .... Will she die? This old Mother of all that is noble or moral or spiritual, the land which the sages trod, the land in which Godlike men still live and breathe? I will borrow the lantern of the Athenian sage and follow you, my brother, through the cities and villages, plains and forests, and this broad world – show me such men in other lands if you can. (IV. 347-48).

The debt which the world owes to our Motherland is immense. Taking country with country, there is not one race on this earth to which the world owes to much as to the patient Hindu, the mild Hindu .... Here activity prevailed when even Greece did not exist, when Rome was not thought of, when the very fathers of the modern Europeans lived in the forests and painted themselves blue. Even earlier, when history has no record, and tradition dares not peer into the gloom of that intense past, even from then until now, ideas after ideas have marched out from her, but every world has been spoken with a blessing behind it, and peace before it. (III. 105-06)

“Now understand clearly where the soul of this progress is: it is in religion. Because no one was able to destroy that, therefore the Hindu nation is still living, having survived so many troubles and tribulations. Well, one Indian scholar asks, ‘What is the use of keeping the soul of the nation in religion? Why not keep it in social or political independence, as is the case with other nations? It is very easy to talk like that .... The fact is: that the river has come down a thousand miles from its source in the mountains ; does it, or can it, go back to its source? If it ever tries to trace back its course, it will simply dry up by being dissipated in all directions. Anyhow the river is sure to fall into the ocean, sooner or later, either by passing through open and beautiful plains or struggling through grimy soil. If our national life of these ten thousand years has been a mistake, then there is no help for it; and if we try now to form a new character, the inevitable result will be that we shall die. (V. 459-60).

### **Motivating the youth to draw strength from faith**

Swami Vivekananda states that if the youth has faith in itself then we have the divine itself besides us, as self belief is the core of success in the world. If our youth is self reliant, with high self worth and esteem then nothing can hold them back from reaching the zenith.

Swami Vivekananda says “The history of the world is the history of an few men who had faith in themselves. That faith calls out the divinity within. You can do anything. You fail only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power. As soon as a man or a nation loses faith, death comes. “(VIII. 228)

He further says ”Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God, this is the secret of greatness. If you have faith in all the three hundred and thirty millions of your mythological gods, and in all the gods which foreigners have now and again introduced into your midst, and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you.” (III. 190)

Swami states that “If there is one word that you find coming like a bomb from the Upanisads, bursting like a bomb-shell upon masses of ignorance, it is the word, fearlessness.” (III. 160)

### **Motivating the youth on importance of physical health and activity**

Swami Vivekananda had a radiant and leonine personality, resonant voice, so he commanded attention wherever he went. He laid great emphasis on physical health.

Swami Vivekananda states that “Be strong, my young friends, that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to heaven through football than through the study of the Gita. These are bold words, but I have to say them, for I love you. I know where the shoe pinches. I have gained a little experience. You will understand the Gita better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger.” (III. 242)

### **Motivating the youth to train their mind to achieve success**

Swami Vivekananda says you will surely achieve success if you immerse yourself in the pursuit of your goals. There is no petty job, you need to take pride in whatever you do. He

says like horses have to be trained to drive a chariot so is your mind which needs to be reigned.

He says “Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life – think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success..... If we really want to be blessed, and make others blessed, we must go deeper.” (I. 177)

Swami questions and the answers us on “How has all the knowledge in the world been gained but by the concentration of the powers of the mind? The world is ready to give up its secrets, if we only know how to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point; that is the secret. (I. 130-31)

He says that”No force can be created; it can only be directed. Therefore, we must learn to control the grand powers that are already in our hands, and by will power make them spiritual, instead of merely animal. Thus it is clearly seen that chastity is the cornerstone of all morality and of all religion.” (VIII. 46)

### **Motivating the youth to believe in themselves**

Swami Vivekananda asks the youth to take personal responsibility for our actions whether good or bad, and when he says this becomes the habit then ours will be a crime free society.

Swami says that“We are responsible for what we are, and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions; so we have to know how to act.” (I. 31)

He also reiterates “Man is man, so long as he is struggling to rise above nature, and this nature is both internal and external..... And if we read the history of nations between the lines, we shall always find that the rise of a nation comes with an increase in the number of such men; and the fall begins when this pursuit after the Infinite, however vain the Utilitarian’s may call it, has ceased. That is to say, the mainspring of the strength of every race lies in its spirituality, and the death of that race begins the day that spirituality wanes and materialism gains ground. (II. 64-65)

His statement that youth should “Make your own future. ‘Let the dead past bury its dead.’ The infinite future is before you, and you must always remember that each word, thought, and deed lays up a store for you, and that as the bad thoughts and bad works are ready to spring upon you like tigers, so also there is the inspiring hope that the good thoughts and good deeds are ready with the powers of a hundred thousand angels to defend you always and for ever.” (II. 225)

### **Motivating the youth to gain education**

Swami Vivekananda says that “Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.” (IV. 358) he questions “What is education? Is it book learning? No. is it diverse knowledge? Not even that. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful is called education”. (IV. 490) then he answers “To me the very essence of education is concentration of mind, not the collecting facts. If I had to do my education over again, and had any voice in the matter, I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment, and then with a perfect instrument I could collect facts at will. (VI. 38-39)”

Swami says that “The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a

spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on his own legs. “(VII. 147-48)

Swami says “Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have life building, man-making, character making, assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library.” (III. 302)

### **Motivating the Youth to believe in Brotherhood of Mankind**

Swami Vivekananda states that “Our duty to others means helping others; doing good to the world. Why should we do good to the world? Apparently to help the world, but really to help ourselves.... Do not stand on a high pedestal and take five cents in your hand and say, ‘Here, my poor man,’ but be grateful that the poor man is there, so that by making a gift to him, you are able to help yourself. It is not the receiver that is blessed, but it is the giver. Be thankful that you are allowed to exercise your power of benevolence and mercy in the world, and thus become pure and perfect. “(I. 75-76)

He believes that “The watchword of all well being, of all moral good, is not ‘I’ but ‘Thou’. Who cares whether there is a heaven or a hell, who cares if there is a soul or not, who cares if there is an unchangeable or not? Here is the world, and it is full of misery. Go out into it as Buddha did, and struggle to lessen it or die in the attempt. Forget yourselves; this is the first lesson to be learnt, whether you are a theist or an atheist, whether you are an agnostic or a Vedantist, a Christian or a Mohammaedan.” (II. 353)

Swami says “You cannot help anyone, you can only serve; serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege, if the Lord grants that you can help any one of His children, blessed you are; do not think too much of yourselves. Blessed

you are that that privilege was given to you when others had it not. Do it only as a worship.”

(III. 246)

Swami Vivekananda states “After so much austerity, I have understood this as the real truth God is present in every jiva; there is no other God besides that. ‘Who serves jiva, serves God indeed’. (VII. 247)

### **Conclusion**

Swami Vivekanda was born on 12<sup>th</sup> Jan 1863 in Calcutta. His birthday is celebrated as youth day since. His quote "arise awake and stop not till the goal is reached" motivates us to believe and achieve success in whatever endeavour we seek. Swami Vivekananda and his words have never being more significant, than in the society of today, where drug addiction, criminal behaviour, waywardness of our youth makes the headlines of newspaper every day. If we keep in mind his statement that “In doing evil, we injure ourselves and others also. In doing good, we do good to ourselves and to others as well..... According to Karmyoga, the action one has done cannot be destroyed until it has borne its fruit; no power in nature can stop it from yielding its results. If I do an evil action, I must suffer for it; there is no power in this universe to stop or stay it. Similarly, if I do a good action, there is no power in the universe which can stop its bearing good results. “(I. 82)

### **Endnotes**

1. AdvaitaAshrama “Vivekananda His call to the Nation”, Feb 2000, Swapna Printing Works private limited, Calcutta.
2. AdvaitaAshrama “The Complete works of Swami Vivekananda Vol I-VIII”, Jan 1989, Swapna Printing Work Private limited, Kolkata.

3. Editor S.K.Chatterji “The Cultural Heritage of India”,2006,The Ramakrishna Mission  
Institute of Culture, Kolkata