



Vivekananda's concept of Universal Religion-A spiritual outlook

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Abstract

The most significant contribution of Swami Vivekananda to the modern world is 'Universal religion'. Religion is deeply rooted in man and in our society. Even in this modern era where science and technology transforming the whole world in a global village but the religion continues to hold paramount importance in our everyday existence. Universal Religion has great socio-philosophic relevance to built up the world peace in the modern world. In this twenty first century we have numerous kinds of religions and their different kinds of beliefs, rituals, philosophy and their practices. Due to why we often have to deal with differences, conflicts, and violence based on existing religious. Universal religion has an enlightened understanding of and respect for all the religions without losing the sense of belonging to his own religion with its belief and practices. Swami Vivekananda is a philosopher who has derived the concept of Universal Religion from Sankara's Advaita Philosophy. Swami Vivekananda says that religion does not consist in subscribing to a particular faith but in spiritual realisation. here is no place for any kind of intolerance, hatred, conversion, persecution, bloodshed and the feelings of superiority in universal religion that produces differences between religions, it is simply based on the expression of non dualism that teaches us the feeling of oneness. In this paper I want to glimpse on spiritual outlook of Universal Religion and its existence in the modern world.

Keywords: Universal Religion, belief, spiritual, Swami Vivekananda, Religion, Yoga, Soul, God.

Introduction

Swami Vivekananda was a Great Philosopher and one of the most celebrated spiritual leader of India who is a legendary figures of nineteenth century in the history of India. He is not only a admirable figure of Indian History but an institution in itself. Swami Vivekananda was more than just spiritual mind, he was a prolific thinker, great orator and passionate patriot. He carried on the free thinking philosophy of his guru, Ramakrishna paramhansa forward into a new paradigm. He worked tirelessly by towards betterment of the society, in servitude of the poor and needy, dedicating his all for his country.

Swami Vivekananda's contribution in the domain of religion was immeasurable. He rejuvenated Hinduism and Vedanta as his religion. He conveyed innumerable messages for our country from his teaching which are beneficial not only in modern times but also has a deep significance for the present-day society. Religion is deeply rooted in man and his blood since many centuries ago. Religion is one of the idea that plays a vital role in our society which cannot be ignored. Even in the contemporary threshold of the twenty-first century where science and technology are evolving day by day all around the world but still the role of religion is well acknowledged by each of us. Within the framework of human rights, religion is considered as an inherent and individual right of the man. Religion has been a dominating factor in man and his ways of thinking and behaviour. Swami Vivekananda was inspired and influence by the ancient culture and philosophy of India that can be easily traced from all his messages and teaching as they all were rooted in the philosophy of Upanishads. He derived many ideas from Vedanta philosophy which is not only related to metaphysics but also has social and practical implications in human life.

METHODOLOGY

In this paper is using analytical research methods, where the writings of Swami Vivekananda's to deduce the notion of Universal Religion. Mainly the secondary datas are used to prepare this paper. The sources are collected from various books, journals Internet.

The main objective of this paper is to discuss about Vivekananda's concept of Universal Religion and find out spiritual outlook. The paper is to propose a way forward from religion conflicts in the present world by arguing the utility of the idea Universal Religion as posited by Swami Vivekananda.

DISCUSSION

Swami Vivekananda has advocated the concept of Universal Religion from the Vedanta Philosophy. He claimed that Vedanta Philosophy has the potential to harmonize the diversity of Religion and also binds them in a thread of unity. A Universal Religion is really Universal must satisfy atleast two conditions. Firstly it must open its gates to every individual, it must admit that nobody is born with this or that Religion or the other must ultimately be left to his inner likes and choice. Secondly Universal Religion must be able to give satisfaction and comfort to every religious sect. Therefore Universal religion really must be broad and large enough to supply food to all these minds.

Universal Religion is not a new addition to the existing list of known Religions like Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism. Swamiji emphasis to concentrate the universally aspect of any religion so that bad effects of the religionsities can be avoided. It is the mark of universality. When we shall throw away the narrow outlooks, non-humanitarian considerations from the religions, they all will become universal by nature. So every religions is potentially a universal religion. According to Vivekananda there are three aspect or contents of religion-

1. Philosophy:- Philosophy seeks to represent the whole scope of that religion, setting forth its basic principles, the goal and the means for reaching it.
2. Mythology :- Mythology consist of legends relating to the moral and spiritual adventures of men and supermen. Vivekananda says that mythology concretises philosophy by making the imaginary lives of men and supermen the mode or vehicle for conveying the philosophical ideas.
3. Ritual :- Ritual is made up of forms and ceremonies that serve the function of both keeping men engaged religiously and of organising them in powerful religious organizations.

In Universal Religion he did not mean any one Universal Philosophy or any one Universal Mythology or any one Universal Ritual held alike by all. According to Vivekananda this world must go on working wheel within wheel, this intricate mass of machinery, most complex, most wonderful. Everybody can only make it run smoothly, lessen the friction, grease the wheels as it were. Everybody should recognized the natural necessity of variation because the variety is the first principle of life.

According to Swami Vivekananda all the different kind of religious sects essentially exist and there is no issue if they also kept on multiplying. As these differences gives us various ways and paths to achieve our spiritual goals in life. Universal religion will be religion of all religious people and not of one particular group on society. It will thus be the universally accepted religion. The central idea in the life and teaching of Vivekananda was religious universalism. In the eyes of those who believed in universalism. There was no differences between the followers of different religions. All the religions are universal, equal and true.

Vivekananda believe that universal religion is really exist. We are so lost the external conflicts of religions that we fail to notice its presence. He demonstrates this in a very clean manner. He says Firstly that a simple insight into the natures of different religion will show that they are not actually contradictory to each other. They are in fact supplementary to each other. The truth of religion is so comprehensive that different religion concentrate only on one aspect or on a few aspect of religion. Every religion is adding to the rich variety that religion is capable of generating and it is also adding to the development of religion in its own way. Its interpretation may be partial but as Vivekananda says may never progresses from error to truth but from truth to truth, from lesser truth to higher truth. Secondly Vivekananda wishes to make it clear that there may be contradictory points of view of the same things. If we take photograph of the same objects from different angles, no two photographs will be alike. They make even give opposite impressions, but they are the photographs of same objects. It will make a difference between man and man, and this explain the contradictory character of the different views. But they are basically views of the same reality and hence supplementary to each other. So the Universal Religion is already exist. The Universal religion exist is the Universal brotherhood of men.

Vivekananda Said that truth may be expressed in many ways and that each of that ways are true. Though the pathways of religions are different but the goal of all religions is also the same in essence. The vision of all religions and all mankind is re-union with God or with the divinity which is every man's true nature. The main religious teaching is harmony, which is the main keynote of Vivekananda. By harmony Swamiji meant Unity and not Uniformity. Harmaony cannot be obtained by a combination of different views about God. When religions are dead, there will be no more sects, it will be the perfect peace and harmony of the grave. So one natural characteristics of the Universal religion is best on universal toleration.

According to Swami Vivekananda religion is equally acceptable to all minds. It must be equally emotional, equally mystic, equally philosophic and equally conducive to action. The religion is attained by Yoga or Union with God. 'Yoga' means 'Yoke' to join, i.e. to join the soul of man with the supreme soul or God. Vivekananda wanted to development the all four Yogas. The ultimate goal of its Yoga is the realisation of the supreme self. The main aim of universal religion is teach us the knowledge of divinity of the soul, the non duality, the unity of existence, i.e. universality of different religions.

CONCLUSION

Universal religion is the notion for all kinds of religious dissensions. It binds the religious diversity into golden thread of unity. The concept of universal religion is application to the modern global world. This truly global vision can form the foundation for peaceful coexistence of all in the globe and we can bring the dream that 'entire world is one family'. There is no place for any kind of intolerance, hatred, conversion, persecution, bloodshed and the feelings of superiority in universal religion that produces differences between religions, it is simply based on the expression of non dualism that teaches us the feeling of oneness. Universal religion is very signification idea and no one could deny that, it is also an ideal approach that accepts all the diverse opinions, beliefs, cultures and respect the diversity in order to bring peace, promote brotherhood and harmony for the better functioning of human life and society. This concept of religion is like "Many Lamps, but one light". The philosophy of Religion of Swami Vivekananda teaches us that to love God and realized the Ever-living and feel that "All are one" is the true spiritual mark of understanding religion. Man cannot live without religion. It is rational and very deeply intellectual.

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