

Swami Vivekananda: A Great Indian Leader

Swami Vivekananda was a famous Indian saint, philosopher, and thinker. He was born on **January 12, 1863**, in Kolkata (then called Calcutta), India. His real name was **Narendranath Datta**, but people lovingly call him Swami Vivekananda. His father, Vishwanath Datta, was a lawyer, and his mother, Bhuvaneshwari Devi, was a kind and religious woman.

Early Life of Swami Vivekananda

Narendranath was a bright and curious child. He loved to read books and learn new things. He was very good in his studies and had a sharp memory. He loved music, especially Indian classical music, and could sing beautifully. He was also a strong boy who loved sports and exercise.

Since childhood, he wanted to know about God and the meaning of life. He asked many questions about religion and spirituality. These questions made him look for a true teacher.

Meeting His Guru: Ramakrishna Paramhansa

One day, Narendranath met **Ramakrishna Paramhansa**, a holy man who became his teacher. Ramakrishna answered all his questions about God and life. He taught him that God is present in all living beings and that serving people is like serving God. This teaching changed Narendranath's life forever.

After Ramakrishna passed away, Narendranath became a monk. He gave up his home, family, and wealth to serve humanity. He took the name **Swami Vivekananda**.

Journey to the West

Swami Vivekananda wanted to spread Indian culture and spiritual knowledge around the world. In **1893**, he went to Chicago, USA, to attend the **Parliament of the World's Religions**. He gave a speech there that began with the famous words, "**Sisters and Brothers of America.**" His speech was full of wisdom, kindness, and love. Everyone clapped and praised him for his powerful words.

He talked about the importance of peace, harmony, and respect for all religions. His speech made him very popular in the West. Many people wanted to learn from him.

Teachings of Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda taught people to be strong and fearless. He believed that every person has the power to achieve great things. He said, “**Arise, awake, and stop not until the goal is reached.**”

He wanted young people to work hard and make India a great nation. He believed in equality and said that all religions teach the same truth. He asked people to love and help the poor.

Ramakrishna Mission

Swami Vivekananda started the **Ramakrishna Mission** in 1897. The mission helps poor and sick people and spreads education. It also teaches people about spirituality. Today, the Ramakrishna Mission has centers all over the world.

Swami Vivekananda's Death

Swami Vivekananda passed away on **July 4, 1902**, at the age of 39. Even though he lived a short life, his teachings continue to inspire millions of people.

Why We Remember Him

Swami Vivekananda is remembered as a great leader and a role model for the youth. His birthday, **January 12**, is celebrated as **National Youth Day** in India. He showed the world the greatness of Indian culture and spirituality.

Swami Vivekananda's life teaches us to be kind, hardworking, and brave. He taught us to believe in ourselves and to serve others selflessly. His words still inspire us to live a good and meaningful life.