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Sanatana Dharma

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Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda once said, “Science stands on its own feet and its own light and challenges comparison with any other sciences. There have been charlatans and magicians and cheats and more here than any other field. This is because that the more profitable the business, the greater the number of charlatans and cheats. But that is no reason why the business is not good.” Swami Vivekananda saw that both science and Vedantic spirituality are concerned with the same ideal: truth. Science seeks truth from the natural world, while Vedantic spirituality seeks truth from the spiritual realm. Thus, he made it his goal to combine both studies, by understanding both and using one to explain the other, using the principles of Dharma to explain the laws of nature.

Although a Vedantic guru, Swami Vivekananda has gone past the presupposed belief that religion and science must not meet and has taken into his own hands to not only openly declare his views of science, but also explain the importance of education throughout the world for both men and women. Swami Vivekananda’s contributions to the field of physics are not only innumerable but also accurate. During the 19th century, when the theory of gravity had been established, it had failed to resolve the inter-relatedness and inter-dependence of four major parameters: space, time, matter, and energy. During this fix, Swami Vivekananda merely stated with Vedantic knowledge that the four are not only interrelate but energy and matter are also interchangeable in the space and time domains. In fact, Swami Vivekananda wrote about his explanation, where he mentions the Sankhya cosmology and the theory of cycles by the Hindus,

to Tesla and Tesla was amazed to see the resemblance between such Vedantic philosophies and modern physics. This theory was later proven mathematically through Einstein's theory of relativity, where matter is just a latent of energy.

Swami Vivekananda also had a view on the theory of unity long before it was actually discovered using Quantum physics. Swami Vivekananda once said in Madras and later repeated the same concept in London, "One atom of the universe cannot move without dragging the whole world with it." He was trying to echo his belief that everyone and everything in the universe are connected, and each mind is connected with every other mind wherever it is located, meaning it is in communication with the entire world. Though the correct science to explain such a phenomenon had not been developed then, a few years later with the advent of Quantum Physics, the Soeren Prell theory implies that at a deep and fundamental level the separate parts of the world are connected in an intimate and immediate way as any change in one immediately causes changes in the other. Swami Vivekananda's views of science are not only limited to physics but exist in the field of biology as well.

Throughout many centuries, scientists and clergymen have fought about the Darwin's theory of evolution and the evolution or creation of man. Darwin's theory of evolution states that all organisms have evolved over time from a common ancestor and Darwin uses a scientific theory which he has coined "natural selection" or "survival of the fittest" to explain such a phenomenon. Although Swami Vivekananda did not completely reject this theory, he did disagree with a few components of this theory. Swamiji states, "Certainly it is true that man cannot simply be an evolution. Every evolution has an involution. This involution and evolution is on throughout the whole of nature." With this statement, Swamiji mentions that the theory proposed by Darwin is provincial in nature; Swamiji's opinions are later legitimized by cell

biologists, Christian de Duve and Brian Goodwin. Their research proves that although Darwin's theory works for small aspects of evolution, there is no significant support for gradual evolution of hereditary mutations adding up to large scale aspects of evolution.

A major part of Swamiji's views on science include his views on education as it is his most cherished tenet that poor countries like India would be able to overcome poverty and backwardness only by mastering technology by providing education to the youth. However, Swamiji feels that the studies in India and in the United States are solely focusing on intellectual development with less emphasis on moral development. Swamiji voices his concern when he states, "To me the essence of education is the concentration of the mind, not just collection of facts. The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle of life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion-Is it worth its name?" When Swamiji speaks of courage his concern is mostly pointed at the women in poor countries like India and more all around the world. He feels that education for a female should not only focus on the home and family but extend to other fields such as mathematics, science, literature, history, art, and many more. The objective of education for women, and for that matter, any person is to make them strong, fear-less, and conscious of their dignity. Thus Swamiji stresses the importance of education in all fields with an emphasis put not only in intellectual development, but moral development as well because "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man."

Swami Vivekananda's views in matters such as those in physics and biology are not astonishing because of their accuracy, but because of the process by which he deduced them. Swamiji merely used the information written in the Vedanta's to describe phenomena occurring in the natural world, phenomena which had puzzled scientists from the beginning of science.

Also Swamiji uses science to emphasize the importance of education to the youth, including the women, to better the world. The sciences in the world are only useful if the people believe in them and have the courage to delve deeper into their mysteries.