

Republics in East Punjab. In the middle of the third century, the Vakatakas rose to power, of whom Pravarasena was recognised as the Emperor of Aryavarta.

The rise of the Bharashivas represented a national upsurge to deliver the country from the foreign rule of the Shakas and the Kushanas. Of this resurgence, God Shiva was the symbol and the guardian.

“We find Shiva everywhere in this period,” says Jayaswal. “The era is surcharged with the belief that the Destroyer Himself has founded the Bharashiva State, that He is the guarantor of the king, of the people and of the Bharashiva kingdom.”

The Nagas were styled by the *Pauranic* traditions as serpents. Takshaka and Karkotaka from whom one can protect oneself by invoking Shiva, their Lord and Master, were in fact the names of Naga rulers. The Nagas performed ten *ashvamedhas* at Kashi and Bhrugukachchha on the Narmada. Shiva and Nandi

were added as honorific titles by kings and emperors to their names. Their images were carved on official seals as the emblem of Varnashrama Dharma.

The tremendous political events led to a cultural renaissance of which Shiva was the pivotal centre. Ganga was the emblem of purity. The sacredness of the bull and the cow was accepted as a national creed.

The great literary movement in favour of Sanskrit began in this period and was carried forward by the Vakatakas and the Guptas. Sanskrit became the language, not only of religion but also of refinement and courts.

As Dr. Jayaswal puts it, the foundations of modern Hinduism were laid by the Naga emperors and its edifice was built by the Guptas. The Naga Empire included Gujarat and evidently the existence of the First Temple in this period shows that Prabhasa was a place sacred to Shiva.

From the Bhavan's President Swami Vivekananda

The Prophet of India
R. Venkataraman



Primordial man was no better than the beast. He drank and slept like any other animal. He hunted for his food and killed other animals including his own species and ate them.

Such a man lives today in a society with noble qualities like kindness, compassion, controlling wrath and selfishness and enjoying literature, art, music, dance, painting and a host of other soul filling activities. While other animals have continued to be the same, the

mighty elephant remains the same elephant and the beautiful peacock the same peacock.

Man had advanced materially and spiritually. All animals have brains but only Man has intellect and the ability to think. If we look back in human history, we find that it is religion, which has tamed the primitive instincts of violence, greed, and selfishness and promoted kindness, compassion, charity to the poor etc.

All religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam,

Sikh or Zoroastrian preach morality and good conduct. No religion says that one can kill, steal, cheat, tell lies or covet. By intelligent use of Heaven and Hell, religions put the fear of God from early childhood.

The Hindu religion, which is of greatest antiquity, has always stood for equal respect for all religions. The *Rig Veda* says:

*Aakashat Prathitham toyam
Yada gachati sagaram
Serva Deva nameskarah
Kesavam pratigatchathi*

Just as the drops of rain which fall from the sky go to the ocean worship of every God reaches the Supreme Being

In the 19th Century when each religion was claiming



superiority for itself over the other religions and saying that other religionists will go to hell, Swami Vivekananda gave a clarion call at the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago held on 11th

September 1893 that each religion was a path to salvation and each and every religion is equal and entitled to equal respect. This appealed to the people though religious leaders were averse to the thought.

Swamiji quoted Bhagavat Gita (Ch.iv;v;ix)

*Ye yatha mam prapadyante
Tams tathaiva Bhajami Aham
Mama vartama anuvatan
Manushyaha Partha
Sarvasah*

In whatever form men

I congratulate the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan USA on their twin programmes one to offer "Homage to the Legacy of Swami Vivekananda on September 21 where a galaxy of eminent Swamiji's of the Ramakrishna Mission will speak on Vivekananda's life and teachings and their relevance to the present times and the other programme on 10th September 2002 which our esteemed Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee will inaugurate and release the special publication "Swami Vivekananda, the prophet of India." These two are landmark events in the annals of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

As promised by the Lord in Bhagavat Gita that He would incarnate from time to time to annihilate Adharma and restore Dharma, we find that India had produced not only Avatars like Narasimha, Vamana, Rama and Krishna but Saints and Sages like Buddha, Mahavira, Adi Sankara, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Vivekananda and Ramana Maharshi. Each one of them had made a profound contribution to raise the moral and spiritual qualities of Man and the Society as a whole.



Ramakrishna
Paramahansa

In the context of world terrorism causing havoc to the Society itself and threatening the peaceful existence of humanity living in any part of the earth, Swami Vivekananda's clarion call for religions harmony and tolerance and equal respect for all religions must be accepted by every person with even a modicum of sense.

The Bhavan is fortunate in persuading Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee to spare some time to participate in the function. An eminent statesman with broad and liberal outlook on issues national and international, a scholar with deep knowledge of our scriptures and ancient heritage, a politician with impeccable integrity and a humanist with profound sympathy for the masses and weaker sections, the Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee has carved for himself an indelible niche in the annals of the nation. I am sure that his presence and his counsel will be a source of great inspiration to widen the activities of the Bhavan in the years ahead.

R. Devaiah

worship Me, in the same way I fulfil their desires. Men pursue My path O Partha in all ways.

This is a new perception that Swami gave to the world and to other religions.

In the several papers he read at the Parliament of Religions Swami spoke about the essential principles of Hinduism and helped to dispel all the wrong notions propagated by parties interested in prosylitisation. His address on Hinduism is an eternal document.

Swamiji did not merely preach Vedanta. He was deeply concerned with human welfare. He did not wish to offer religion as a palliative to a humanity steeped in poverty and misery. He declared "I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the tears of a widow or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth. Where should you go to seek God? Are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, Gods? Why not worship them first?"

You have read,
Mathru Devo Bhava.
Pitru Devo Bhava
but I say
Daridra Devo Bhava".

Vivekananda firmly believed that education is the



vital instrument of human progress. But he scoffed at the

idea of mere learning and remembering facts, figures and statistics. He said, "Education is not the amount of information that is put in your brain and run riot there, undigested all your life.

We must have life-building, man making, character making assimilation of ideas.

If education is identical with information the libraries are the greatest sages of the world and encyclopedias are the rishies."

He quoted a Sanskrit verse, which says that the pack animal, which carries sandalwood, knows only the weight and not the value of sandalwood.

He kindled the dormant dynamism in Man; and

rejuvenated not merely the Hindu religion but all faiths.

The later half of the twentieth Century saw a fall in ethical and moral values. Instead of faith in God and in values of life it kindled the rapacious greed in Man and naked worship of Mammon.

It also saw wide spread lawlessness, crimes, and indifference to life and liberty. All these culminated in waves of terrorism throughout the world.

Today no country is immune from terrorism including the most advanced nations in the world. It is in this context Vivekananda's teachings and sermons acquire primacy in the globe that we live in.

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**ONE GETS EVERYTHING
WHEN THE MIND
BECOMES STEADY.**

- Holy Mother