

# Relevance of Arya Samaj

For the Youth- *by Shastri Mwangi Arya Nairobi*

Maharishi Dayanand drew authority from the Vedas, founded Arya Samaj, and gave it ten pillars or principles of governance through which it zealously attempts to make the whole world noble. These principles are formulae for attaining tranquility for both the individual and society. They radiate with the Philosophical, scientific, spiritual and social teachings of the Vedas, thereby being the basis upon which Arya Samaj pursues the accomplishment of its mission of physical, spiritual and social upliftment of the human Fraternity regardless of race, nationality, or religion.

Rishi Dayanand clearly stated that he did not found a new religion or sect. His aim was the re-establishment of the teachings and primacy of the Vedas as explained and taught by the ancient seers and sages. If he ever advocated for a religion, he categorically pointed out to a religion that is based on universal principles, which according to him, eternally find acceptance as true by mankind. Such religion is one that is above the hostility of all human creeds.

Introducing his philosophy in the Satyarth Prakash, Rishi Dayanand proclaimed that his aim was to further the advancement of mankind and to thus help all to ascertain what is right, thereby enable all to accept truth and reject falsehood. According to

Dayanand, truth must be pursued analytically. He and all Vedic seers have shown that Vedic ideology and thought is inclined to pursuit of truth, and is thus best suited for our highly analytical modern and changing world that is dominated by science And technology. The inhabitants of the modern world, especially the young minds

(Youth) do not seek for truth and reality from the traditional understanding as presented by religious dogmas. The modern mind inclines to purpose oriented and experiential approach in seeking balance and reality of life. This was what Dayanand saw in the Vedas, a way of life that is not inclined to dogmas, but a way of life that is practical and even that is scientifically verifiable. It is this approach which he personally advocated for, making the philosophy of Arya Samaj of great relevance to the youth of the modern time.

Being the extended hand of Dayanand, Arya Samaj must thus device all possible means to expose the youth to this Vedic way of life, and empower them spiritually, which would shape their self awareness in tune with the reality of existence. Self-awareness and spiritual empowerment hold the key to raising the status of the youth in society. It would inspire in them the virtue of independence in thought thereby

imparting in them the spirit of self-confidence. If the youth are not well equipped with self-awareness and spiritual power, it would be difficult to sustain confidence based only on Good academic education and a good job. That is the reason why it is common to find well qualified and educated youth losing their self esteem when faced with difficult and challenging situations.

Spiritual empowerment would thus specifically mean the awakening of consciousness that enables one to know the true relationship between souls and God, and souls and matter. This simply means the ability to recognize the truth about self, about the relationship of self with the people and the nature around, and with the divine phenomena. This awareness is empowering Because it is the beginning of taking care of own self and well as understanding others in a better way. One thus begins to appreciate the needs of others in a genuine manner. The youth should at an early age be encouraged to embrace the qualities of self expression. They must be encouraged to think about whom they are, and what they really enjoy doing. They should also be encouraged to study works that would inspire in them the attitudes of rising above cheap personal ambitions (selfishness) to socially beneficial endeavors. One fact is undeniable that our youth are our future. Our present commitment and contribution to their upliftment shall largely mould the future world. We must simply understand that by shaping the young minds today, we

are designing the nature of our future generations and world.

It is our sacred duty to supply the youth with vision and ethical values to save the Vedic cultural heritage and the traditions that our forefathers stood as uncompromised trustees, and ably passed on to us. As the Arya fraternity, we ought to inspire in the youth sentiments of a life of balanced development. We must therefore utilize the vessel of Arya Samaj to give the content of our Vedic Shastras to the youth, and guide them to embrace sharing, from which they would learn to be generous. We must guide them to embrace honesty and fairness, so that they can learn what truth and justice are. If they would know how to live with serenity, they learn to have peace of mind, which would contribute to peace in society. If we want our youth to be positive, progressive and pragmatic we must not forget that every coin has two sides. This means that we must inspire in them the knowledge that material development and spirituality must go hand in hand, as is ordained in the Yajurved that, Very different are the fruits obtained from Avidya and Vidya, and that one who knows both Vidya and Avidya together, overcomes death by Avidya and attains emancipation, immortality and bliss by Vidya. If they are made to understand the practical reality of such ordinance, they would be able to discriminate between right and wrong, false and truth, and good and bad. In this way, they would truly learn to appreciate the meaning of life and Arya Samaj.