

# Sri Ramkrishna and Spiritual awakening

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From time immemorial India has been the perennial source of spirituality. At times she has been visited by different seers who have reiterated individually the same truth blazoned forth in the Upanishadas, when men, to the exclusion of their higher and nobler ends of life, have been labouring under an illusion. This forgetfulness of their own ideas and ideals has resulted in chaos and restlessness, sweeping over the whole society. Thus stranded in the way of their cultural progress, like benighted travellers in a forest, they have been confounded, they have lost their hold upon themselves and have been groping for a light in the dark.

The glorious days of antiquity, the religious fervour, the immaculate purity of the Vedic Rishis are to them but things of memory. They fail to create any responsive emotion in them. "Then, will she (India) now submit to being reduced to a crumbling mummy decked with the fineries of a glittering antiquity?" In this need of the hour while India had been in the grip of dark septicism. Sri Ramkrishna visited her (India), tabernacled in flesh and blood. The advent of Sri Ramkrishna at this time was an aegis under which the whole of the country defended itself from the ravaging breakers of exotic culture brought in from the west by the Christian Missionaries. The nihilistic movement of the zealots, accompanied by a proselytising spirit, hardly accepted the truth of any other faith except their own. This weltering chaos of foreign religions, resulting in the conversion of many youths to their own stubborn dogmas stormed the citadel of Hindu faith. But was it then the future awaiting Hinduism that its whole entity would be totally wiped out of the face of the earth? The answer certainly is in the negative, because of the overwhelming turn brought about by the advent of Sri Ramkrishna.

The life of Sri Ramkrishana is a web of spirituality. His wife was something out of the ordinary. Being born of poor parents in the obscurest corner of a village in Bengal, he grew up in years among mango-groves in the unostentatious and unsophisticated way of life of a village boy. Therefore to hope to get an account of thrilling incidents from such a simple life as opposed to that of any other great man of the world is an utter impossibility. Though he was bred in an arena of life in which most of the boys are bred up, yet he had something in him which was wanting in an ordinary human child. From his very boyhood the inexhaustible source of spirituality embodied in him began to reveal itself: His sense of the beautiful was so keen that at the sight of a flight of cranes across the black patches of clouds, he would be caught by an ecstasy.

From this he stepped into manhood, when, as a priest of the "Bhabatarini (Kali) of Dakshineswar", his life of austere Sadhana began, soaring up in its immensity. After the completion of his Sadhana which he continued for a long period of twelve years in every possible way, he proclaimed unto the world—*যত মত তত পথ*। The different forms of religion existing upon the earth are but different ways leading to the same goal—the final resting place of all—great or small, of every creed and colour. Let all the thirsty souls crying for peace, follow in the wake of this Redeemer, be hallowed and stript of their burdens.

"From the fullness of his life, was delivered a message that had the strength and necessary sanction of meeting the pressing demands of the age. Both the faithful conservatives and the rational radicals gradually came to find in him a distinguished saviour of the Hindu view of life." Let us all belonging to every caste and creed stand under his banner of synthesis of all religions and sing with jubilant acclaim the memorable words of Swamiji.—'He who is the lord of every sect, who is all-pervading ... help us, may he give strength and energy unto us for ever and ever.'