

## A RIPPLE OF LOVE IN VIVEKANANDA'S POEMS

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### Abstract

Swami Vivekananda was born in the famed Datta family of Simla, Calcutta. He was an exceptional man, well-versed in Persian and Sanskrit and had a grand penchant for law. He was a man of deep empathy and grand sympathy, and his charity very often knew no favouritism.

Generally speaking, he was a monk and saint. He was not a man of singing capacity. However, he composed some unforgettable saintly poems, songs and hymns. They are a few in numbers, but they have an astounding effect. He has minutely sketched the inner exquisiteness of a man in his poems. Some of his poems are mind-boggling. His poems frankly points out the elevated aspirations of the people. The immense attachment has been shown between God and man. The internal and external beauty has been bifurcated in his poems. Since he was the devotee of the Divine Mother Kali, he has sung hymns in the love of his mother in a very impressive and earnest way. So, all his poems are teemed with pious feelings igniting the mind of readers.

So the existing research paper would attempt to extract the ripple of love in Vivekananda's poems. I would endeavour to touch most of his poems to find out the quintessence of love.

**Keywords:** aspiration, attachment, empathy, favouritism, Kali (a powerful Goddess in Hindu religion), hymns and saintly

Vivekananda, a great philanthropist, pious poet, futurist, scholar, intellect, was born on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 1863 in a legendary Datta family of Simla, Calcutta, India. His father Vishwanath Datta, was a endowed man and well versed in Persian and Sanskrit. His childhood name was Narendra Nath, later known as Swami Vivekananda, shook the world and ushered in a new age of grandeur and finery for India. He was very impish as a child and hard to manage. His mother sometimes used to say:

I prayed to Shiva for a son and He has sent me one of his demons. [12]  
He was a prickly minded person. Once in the school, the teacher was teaching the lesson and he was whispering to other student. Suddenly, the teacher asked him to repeat what he had taught.

All were still, but Naren, having the power to double his mind, was able to listen to the lesson, and would not believe the boys when they pointed to Naren. He explained tidily. So was his psyche supremacy at his student life. Later on, his mind was so developed that his brain was proved exceptional. He himself says:

It so happened that I could understand an author without reading his book line by line. I could get the meaning by just reading the first and last line of a paragraph. As this power developed, I found it unnecessary to read even the paragraph. I could follow by reading only the first and last lines on a page. Further, where the author introduced discussion to explain a matter and it took him four or five or even more pages to clear the subject, I could grasp the whole trend of his argument by only reading the first few lines. [19]

By the passage of time, he was turning exceedingly divine and wanted to experience God unswervingly. So he went to see Sri Ramkrishna at Dakshineswar with some of his friends. He came to know about him by his college principal while he was explaining the 'ecstasy of the poet' [25] on Wordsworth.

Wrapped in his own thought, careless about his body and dress, and unmindful of the external world, Naren entered the room of Sri Ramkrishna. His eyes bespoke an introspective mind, as if some part of it were always concentrated upon something within. Sri Ramkrishna was surprised to find such a spiritual soul coming from the material atmosphere of Calcutta, as he said afterwards. Narendra Nath sang two Bengali songs at the request of Sri Ramkrishna. There was so much feeling and devotion in these songs that Sri Ramkrishna fell into Samadhi. After that Sri Ramkrishna beckoned Naren to go the side room as if to give some private instructions. When Narendra Nath did so, Sri Ramkrishna began to shed tears of joy like one meeting a long-lost dear one. Then amidst sobs and with great tenderness Sri Ramkrishna began to tell how he was waiting for him for a long time, for his ears were well-nigh burnt in listening to the profane words of worldly people and he wanted the championship of one who could appreciate his innermost experience. [26]

Ramkrishna became bewildered and uttered:

God can be realised. One can see and talk to Him as I am doing with you. But who cares to do so? [27]

Eventually, Swami became a solitary monk by February 1891 and began his historic wandering of two years through India. He wandered, free from any plan, constantly with the thought of God in his mind. The swami, in the course of his pilgrimage around India, met with all sorts and conditions of men and found himself today a despised beggar sheltered by pariahs or a brother of the oppressed identifying himself in keen sympathy with their misery, and tomorrow a guest of the princes, conversing on equal terms with Prime Ministers and Maharajas and probing the luxury of the great, and awakening care for the public weal in their torpid hearts. [44-45]

Once he was invited by Maharaja of Khetri to entertain with music by a nautch-girl. Swami returned his request. The singer was deeply grieved when she heard. She sang for Swami:

O Lord, look not upon my evil qualities!  
Thy name O Lord is Same-sightedness.  
One piece of iron is in the image in the temple,  
And another is the knife in the hand of the butcher;  
But when they touch the philosophers' stone,  
Both alike turn to gold.  
So, O Lord, look not upon my evil qualities!  
One drop of water is in the sacred Jamuna,  
And another is foul in the ditch by the roadside;  
But when they fall into the Ganga  
Both alike become holy.  
So, Lord, do not look upon my evil qualities!  
Thy name, O Lord, is Same-sightedness. [28]

The Swami uttered:

That incident removed the scales from my eyes. Seeing that all are indeed the manifestations of the One, I could no longer condemn anybody. [49]

Now he grasped the real meaning of love. Nothing is filthy, everything is hallowed. It depends upon the thinking. When, on Monday, September 11, 1893, he preached before twelve hundred millions of the human race on religious beliefs in the Hall of Columbus Parliament, he showed love and affection to all the religions of the world. With his righteous bearing, dazzling countenance and gorgeous apparel, he drew the notice of the assembled thousands and soon became the cynosure of all eyes. He says:

As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so O Lord, the different paths which men take, through different tendencies, various though they may appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee. [63-64] Whosoever comes to me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are through paths which in end lead to Me. [63-64]

He was the embodiment of love and fondness. He showed kindness and love in everybody. He urges:

Where should you go to seek for God? Are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, gods? Why not worship them first? Why go to dig a well on the shores of the Ganga? Let these people be your God- think of them, pray for them incessantly- the Lord will show you the way. [122-123]

In his poem *My Play Is Done*, he is craving for the blessings:

I go adrift and know not whither. Save me from this fire!  
Rescue me, merciful Mother, from floating with desire!  
Turn not to me Thy awful face, 'tis more than I can bear,  
Be merciful and kind to me, to chide my faults forbear.

Take me, O Mother, to those shores where strives for ever cease;  
Beyond all sorrows, beyond tears, beyond even earthly bliss; [11]

In his poem *Hymn to the Divine Mother*, he urges for help:

O Thou most beautiful! Whose holy hands  
Hold pleasure and hold pain! Doer of good!  
Who art Thou? The water of existence  
By Thee is whirled and tossed in mighty waves.  
Is it, O Mother, to restore again?  
This universe is broken harmony  
That Thou, without cessation, art of work? [58]

In *Many Happy Returns*, he praises:

The mother's heart, the hero's will,  
The softest flower's sweetest feel;  
The charm and force that ever sway  
The altar fire's flaming play;  
The strength that leads, in love obeys;  
Far-reaching dreams, and patient ways,  
Eternal faith in self, in all  
The sight Divine in great, in small;  
All these, and more than I could see  
Today may 'Mother' grant to thee. [33]

In *In Search of God*, he runs after God to take a glimpse:

Like a child in the wildest forest lost  
I have cried and cried alone,  
'Where art Thou gone, my God, my love?'  
The echo answered, 'gone'. [3]

... ..  
... ..

I called on all the holy names  
Of every clime and creed,  
'Show me the way, in mercy, ye  
Great ones who have reached the goal'? [3]

... ..  
... ..

'Thou art', 'Thou art', the Soul of souls  
In the rushing stream of life  
'Om Tat Sat Om', [Tat Sat means that only real existence] Thou art my God.  
My love, I am Thine, I am Thine. [5]

In the poem *To Sri Krishna*, he urges to let go. How much simplicity and mildness in voice is shown here:

O Krishna, my friend, let me go to the water,  
O let me go today.  
Why play tricks with one who is already thy slave?  
O friend, let me go today, let me go.  
I have to fill my pitcher in the waters of the Yamuna.

I pray with folded hands, friend, let me go. [40]  
*A Song I Sing to Thee* shows the love of a little child:

Like to the playing of a little child  
Is every attitude of mine toward thee?

... ..  
... ..

Who else with all my foolish freaks would bear?  
Thou art my Master! Thou art my soul's real mate. [52]

The poet urges the Lord Shiva in his poem *A Hymn to Shiva*:

Salutation to Shiva! Whose glory  
Is immeasurable, who resembles sky  
In clearness, to whom are attributed  
The phenomena of all creation,  
The preservation and dissolution  
Of the universe! May the devotion,  
The burning devotion of this my life  
Attach itself to Him, to Shiva, who,  
Is Lord of all, with none transcending Him...? [61]

He earnestly urges God's fear in *Thy Love I Fear*:

Thy knowledge, man! I value not,  
It is thy love I fear;

... ..  
... ..

To play and live with thee [82]

In the poem *A Hymn to the Divinity of Sri Ramkrishna* addressed to his spiritual and enlightened Guru Sri Ramkrishna, he chants:

We salute Thee! Lord! Adored of the world,  
Samsara's bondage breaker, taintless Thou,

... ..  
Thou bearest. Thee we salute and adore!

... ..  
... ..

Thou art embellisher. Self-luminous

... ..  
Safely the swelling sea of Samsara

Mercy Incarnate! Austere are Thy deeds.

... ..  
O best of men! O Saviour of the world! [64-65]

My one true treasure is Thy blessed feet,

... ..  
And vanishes, O cherished One, in Thee! [66]

In the poem *Rudra Prayer*, he sings:

From the Unreal lead us to the Real.  
From darkness lead us unto Light  
From death lead us to Immortality.  
Reach us through and through our Self.  
And evermore protect us- Oh Thou Terrible!  
From ignorance, by Thy sweet compassionate face. [75]

So Vivekananda's poems are replete with motions, emotions, spiritualism and pragmatism. He has skilfully expressed his holy thoughts and feelings composing poems. Though he is universally known as a saint, patriot and lover of humanity, very few people outside the circle of his devotees know him as a poet. He has composed the lines spontaneously. He has expressed aesthetic sense through various channels. Some saints are known as great musicians, poets as Dadu, Kabir, Tulsidas, Nanak, Mirabai. Vivekananda also composed poems, songs, hymns etc. Though these are only a few in numbers, yet it may be classified as the creations of poetic art. The poetic appeal and the religious urge are two aspects which have been inseparably combined in his poems. The inner workings of the mind of a prophet are undoubtedly beyond the reach of ordinary knowledge.

Some of the poems composed by him clearly indicate the lofty ecstatic state in which they were shaped and expressed. The poem *Samadhi* indicates beyond doubt that it is the expression of direct personal experience. No wonder that it tends to raise the mind of the reader to a very high plane and to infuse him with lofty aspirations. It is palpable that the same thing may be opined of his poem *Creation*. As a matter of fact, his poems are full of ripples of love, emotion, thoughts and divine feelings.

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