

## Relevance and Acceptability of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in Contemporary World

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### **Abstract**

*Sanskrit, a rich language, is the origin of great ideas. One such idea that originated is - Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. Vasudha means earth and Kutumb means family. Thus, 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' means - the whole earth is a family and all humans and animals living on this earth are part of the same family. Although it is an ancient concept, it is even more relevant today. The most systematic form of Indian culture is first found in the Vedic era. Vedas are considered the oldest texts in the world. From the very beginning, Indian culture has been very sublime, syncretistic, strong and vibrant, in which the scientific approach to life and spiritual coherence is found to be amazing. We cannot find such a strong notion of internationalism elsewhere as that of Vasudhaiva kutumbakam, propagated by Indian culture under which the entire globe is to be considered a single-family. The paper points out how gems of Indian wisdom such as 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' with its underlying philosophy of oneness continues to be relevant and effective in alleviating global conflicts in the present age.*

**Keywords:** *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Old Texts, Indian culture, World spirit, Universalism.*

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## **Introduction**

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः  
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चित दुःखभाग भवेत् ।

Wish for the welfare of all in Indian society forever is considered universal human religion. The Markandeya Purana talks about the welfare of all beings. May all human beings be happy. No creature has any disease or mental anguish. Be perfected by all actions. Treat all beings equally for the benefit of yourself and your sons.

### **How Indian Culture Propagates Idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam?**

The Indian culture amplifies that, when one walks with others, new possibilities take birth<sup>1</sup>. Imagine how beautiful the world would appear if we could inculcate the concept of Vasudhaiva kutumbakam into our faith making it an integral part of our respective religions and practicing this principle in all of our endeavors religiously<sup>2</sup>. In India, when we enter Parliament house it is written Vasudhaiva kutumbakam. There is a lovely Shloka, not written inside Parliament, but on the first gate of Parliament

“अयं निजः नरो वेति बणानालघुचेतमाम्  
उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्” ।<sup>3</sup>

*This is mine, this is of others, such an idea is of frivolous humans. But the whole earth is a family of noble-minded men.*

It should also be the concept of world culture, but we have worked in that how to say Kutumba Eva Vasudha, the other way round. But it should be the concept of Bahujan Sukhaya Bahujana Hitaya - the welfare of many the happiness of many. And in the contemporary world what is happening? “Swajana Sukhaya Swajana Hitaya”. We are working only for our own family or caste. So, there is erosion in our value system<sup>4</sup>. Vasudhaiva kutumbakam asserts a primary and fundamental relationship between all living beings on earth. It acknowledges the continuity and connectedness between all beings on earth.

### **Development of Indian Culture**

All the languages of India are believed to have developed from Sanskrit. Sanskrit has created the Indian culture that we all take pride in today. Rigveda, the world's oldest book, is written in this language. The Rigveda also cultivates the idea of “केवलाघोभवतिकेवलादी” means, who eats alone is a sinner. In the Vedas,

Maharishis have developed the concept of taking everyone along and developing everyone and uplifting everyone.

ॐ सहनाववतु । सहनौभुनक्तु । सहवीर्यकरवाव है । तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु ।  
माविद्विषाव है । ॐ शांति शांति शांति । <sup>5</sup>

The Upanishads preached to wish all the people well by saying 'सर्वेभवन्तुसुखिनः'. Ramayana and Mahabharata preached to abolish all boundaries and said that 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' means all the people living on this earth belong to the same family. The Mahabharata was the first book that preached 'Ahimsa Paramo Dharma' and later this sermon became the basis of Buddhism and Jainism. The biggest element of Indian culture is unity in different life systems and coordination in every sphere of life. It's another feature is the establishment of a moral system and purity of conduct. Taking care of yourself and of others is also its basic mantra<sup>6</sup>. One more important element of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is the world spirit<sup>7</sup> and its education. In the Mahabharata, both these things said, in the case of Republic, are accepted by ancestors. They accept the diversity of industry and growth potential while acknowledging the equality of every caste, clan and individual and want that capacity, duty and goodwill are the basis of public confidence.

There have been two aspects of Indian culture - one individualistic and the other inclusive, i.e. universal. These are what we can call the individual psyche and the public psyche. "कृण्वन्तोविश्वमार्यम्" we will make the whole world superior, civilized and cultured is our reverie. This resolution expresses the noble purpose of Indianisation. Indian culture is pivoted to the 'Idea of India' that gets manifested through acceptance of diversity and celebration of pluralism<sup>8</sup>.

जात्याचयदृशाः सर्वेकुलनेसदृशास्तथा ।

नचोघागेनबुद्धधाथरूपद्रव्येणवापुनः । ।

Our intellectuals have said that there is nothing as sacred as knowledge<sup>9</sup> and it can be accepted by everyone. Our ancestors have presented before us the ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. We must imbibe this ideal in life. If we can experience brotherhood in a human society divided into different sects, species and castes, then there is no reason why we should not experience fraternity and intimacy in the entire Hindu society and Indian society. Gandhi has rightly said that the achievement of cosmopolitanism is impossible without assimilating patriotism. Only nationalism dependent on patriotism and equality can consolidate and strengthen the Indian

Republic, increase courtesy among the various castes, subcastes and sects and pave the way for cosmopolitanism. In Young India<sup>10</sup> Mahatma Gandhi has rightly said, “Man can take help of his family, so why can’t he take help of his neighbors? If he cannot do this, then what is the significance of a great promise like Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam?”<sup>11</sup>

### **Concept of Welfare of All**

Only a culture based on equity can be considered superior. Only then can the spirit of cosmopolitanism, humanity and world welfare be promoted. This is possible only through outgoing review and creative coordination. Ideology has been a virtue of Indian culture since time immemorial. Ideology and deliberation have contributed significantly to the development of Indian culture, and it is through these times that it can be possible for us to abandon inertia and parochialism and creative thinking even at this time. Nationalism, internationalism, democracy and socialism are the main beliefs of this era. Adopting them, incorporating them into Indian culture, is necessary. In this way, socialism coordinates the long-term, universal, living values and facts of Indian culture with the lively progressive elements of Western culture and scientific achievements. In the words of Acharya Narendra Dev<sup>12</sup>, thinkers who believe in socialism want to create a new culture, which will have its origin in the ancient civilization, which will be native in color, in which the excellent parts of the ancient civilization will be protected and at the same time, it will be included in the progressive world today and want to present a new ideal in front of the world. Only then will a world culture be created in which all human beings are free from economic, social and political slavery, all have fundamental human rights, and all have the freedom and dignity to facilitate their economic rise and cultural advancement, in which each nation may equal democratic freedom be achieved, all international fights can be settled in peace and all nations may increase in human welfare through reciprocal cooperation. Similarly the Buddhist idea of “dependent origination” highlights the interconnected nature of the universe.

There is a demand for a reconciliation era between individuals and society. Both individual freedom and an inclusive spirit are necessary for human progress. The ideas of equality, karma-yoga, world consciousness, public interest and modesty propounded by Indian scholars are required in the scientific system of nationality, internationalism, democracy, socialism and history, as proposed by the ancient scholars. For this, along with their scriptures, there should be a critical study of the ideas of democracy, patriotism, world co-operation and parity-state of the great thinkers. The era demands to conserve and enhance its contemporary welfare elements by

abandoning the antiquated elements of its culture, as well as transporting the progressive ideas of profit by critically reviewing the harmful theories and conventions of the ancient thinkers. Today, the calamitous atomization of society and the violent divisiveness of our political, economic and religious institutions make it essential for us to reclaim and embody the universal and unifying principle of One Earth Family, which revolves around one larger family system - a system which was based on scientific spirituality<sup>13</sup>. The profound underlying conviction of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is that only an integrated approach that encompasses the political, economic, ecological, social, legal, cultural and spiritual dimensions and recognizes their inter-dependence can bring about the transformation required today. The Vision of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” is a world-view where the inherent unity and interdependence of all creation is recognized and respected, where every living soul is valued and enabled/empowered to fulfill its potential, and where cultural, ecological and spiritual diversity is valued. Vasudeva kutumbakam highlights the global outlook of Indian sages and thinkers, placing the society above self in every field of endeavor. This focus for the greater good is the key underlying thought. Imbibing the spirit of Vasudev kutumbakam can contribute substantially in generating solidarity with the global community and enhancing global responsibility especially on issues such as climate change, global warming and achieving sustainable development goals, in promoting concepts of universal peace and respect for human rights, including conflict prevention conflict resolution and all terrorism-related issues. Above all Vasudev kutumbakam encourages pluralistic society with compassion and tolerance, accommodating differences no matter whether these are based on religion or culture or language or ethnicity.

### **Conclusion**

Today, the world is eager to witness in some form or the other, unity in the name of sports, environment, global economy, disarmament, etc. The word aspect may vary, but all propound the original mantra given by our ancestors- ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’. Consequently, it is the responsibility of educationists who are seated on the dais and the young student who are receiving their degrees; to reverse the prevailing negative trend and tread on the path of oneness for the betterment of the worldly family. The spiritual fervor attached to the commencement of civilization to us is a unique gift to the world where the saying is ‘udar charitanaam tu vasudev kutumbkam’ (for generous characters the world is one community) that means whatever India had even at the time of Vedas in the fields of science of medicines, armories, chemistry, mathematics, metallurgy, gemology, etc, it was ever open for one and all. The adoption of 21st June as International Day of Yoga by the United

Nations General Assembly in 2014, in response to an India-led resolution with a rd-

### References

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- <sup>2</sup> Mohammad Ateeque, (2018) Identity Conscience Nationalism and Internationalism, Bilaspur: Educreation Publishing, p 188.
- <sup>3</sup> यह अपना है, यह पराया है, ऐसा विचार तुच्छ मनुष्य का है, किन्तु उदार चित्ता का सारी पृथ्वी ही कुटुम्ब है।
- <sup>4</sup> Karan Singh, Holistic Approach to Education in Education in India, Vol. 4 by Shubha Tiwari (2007), New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Dist., p **118**.
- <sup>5</sup> कृष्णयजुर्वेद
- <sup>6</sup> आत्मनः प्रतिकुलानिपरेषानसमाचरेत्
- <sup>7</sup> आत्मौपम्येनसर्वत्रमंपश्यति
- <sup>8</sup> Paramjit Sahay, (2019) Indian Cultural Diplomacy: Celebrating Pluralism in a Globalised World, Delhi: VIJ Books India Pvt Limited, p 22.
- <sup>9</sup> नहिज्ञानेनसदृशंपवित्रभिहविद्यते
- <sup>10</sup> March 21, 1929
- <sup>11</sup> New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, p **32**.
- <sup>12</sup> Hari Dev Sharma, Selected Works of Acharya Narendra Deva, Volume 4, Radiant Publishers, New Delhi, 1998, p **117**.
- <sup>13</sup> Abhay Saxena and Amit Saxena, Workplace Spirituality:A Basic Pillar for Modern Management, International Journal of Management Research and Review, Aug -2011, Volume 1, Issue- 1, p **15**.