



# Arya Samaj

**Dr. M. Vijay Kumar Sharma**

**Associate Professor,**

**Department of Social Work,**

**Mahatma Gandhi Central University,**

**Motihari, Bihar– 848401.**

**SWRK5003**  
**Unit-V,**  
**Bharatiya Approaches to Social**  
**Change and Development**

**Topic- Approaches to Social Reform: Arya  
Samaj**

# Contents

- **Introduction of Arya Samaj**
- **Founder of Arya Samaj**
- **Structure of Arya Samaj**
- **Vedic schools**
- **Contributions of Arya Samaj**
- **References**

# Arya Samaj

**Arya Samaj** is a **monotheistic** Indian Hindu **reform movement** that promotes values and practices based on the belief in the infallible authority of the **Vedas**.

# Founder of Arya Samaj

- The samaj was founded by the sannyasi (ascetic) [Dayanand Saraswati](#) on 10 April 1875.
- Members of the Arya Samaj believe in one God and reject the worship of idols.

# Structure of Arya Samaj

- The Arya Samaj has always had its largest following in western and northern India.
- It is organized in local *samajas* (“societies”) that send representatives to provincial *samajas* and to an all-India *samaja*.
- Each local *samaja* elects its own officers in a democratic manner.

# Foundation of Arya Samaj

- The Arya Samaj was established in Bombay on 10 April 1875 by Dayananda Saraswati (born "Mool Shankar" in Kathiawar, Gujarat 1824 – died Ajmer, 1883).
- An alternative date for the foundation of the samaj is 24 June 1877 because it was then, in Lahore when the samaj became more than just a regional movement based in Punjab.

# Vedic schools

- Between 1869 and 1873, Dayanandji began his efforts to reform orthodox **Hinduism** in India.
- He established *Gurukul* (Vedic schools) which emphasised **Vedic** values, culture, *Satya* (virtue) and *Sanatana Dharma* (the essence of living).
- The schools gave separate educations to boys and girls based on ancient Vedic principles.
- The Vedic school system was also to relieve Indians from the pattern of a **British education**.



## Contd..

- At the schools, students received all meals, lodging, clothing and books free of charge.
- The discipline was strict.
- Students were not allowed to perform *murti puja* (worship of sculpted stone idols).
- Rather, they performed *Sandhyavandanam* (meditative prayer using Vedic mantras with divine sound) and *agnihotra* (making heated milk offering twice daily).

# Values of Arya Samaj

The core beliefs of Arya Samaj are proposed below:

- The primary cause of all genuine knowledge and all that is known by means of knowledge is God.
- God is Truth-consciousness – Bliss personified, Formless, Omnipotent, Just, Merciful, Unborn, Infinite, Unchangeable, Beginningless, Incomparable, Support of all, Lord of all, Omnipresent, Internal, the regulator of all, Undecaying, Immortal, Fearless, Eternal, Holy, and creator of the Universe. He alone deserves worship.

# Contd...


- The Vedas are repositories of all of true knowledge. It is the paramount duty of all Aryas to study and teach and to propound the Veda.
- We should be ever ready to imbibe truth and forsake untruth.
- All acts should be done in accordance with Dharma, i.e. after deliberating upon what is truth and untruth.
- The prime object of Arya Samaj is to do good to the whole world, i.e. to achieve physical, spiritual and social prosperity for all.


# Contd..

- Our conduct towards all should be guided by love, by injunctions of Dharma and according to their respective positions.
- One should dispel ignorance and promote knowledge.
- One should not be content with one's own prosperity only, but should consider the prosperity of all as his own prosperity.
- All human beings should abide by the rules concerning social or everyone's benefit, while everyone should be free to follow any rule beneficial for him/her.

# Contributions of Arya Samaj

- The Arya Samaj opposes worship of *murtis* (images), animal sacrifice, *shraddha* (rituals on behalf of ancestors), basing caste upon birth rather than upon merit, untouchability, child marriage, pilgrimages, priestly craft, and temple offerings.
- The Arya Samajists were vigorous advocates of social reform and worked actively to improve the condition of women.
- They fought the rigidities of the hereditary caste system.

- 
- It has worked to further female education and intercaste marriage; has built missions, orphanages, and homes for widows; has established a network of schools and colleges; and has undertaken famine relief and medical work.
  - They were thus advocates of social equality and promoted social solidarity and consolidation.
  - This promoted nationalism.

- 
- At the same time, one of the Arya Samaj's objectives was to prevent the conversion of Hindus to other religions.
  - This led it to start a crusade against other religions.
  - This crusade became a contributory factor in the growth of communalism in India in the twentieth century.

# References-

- Hastings J. and Selbi J. (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* Kessinger 2003 part 3. p. 57. ISBN 0-7661-3671-X.
- Thursby, G. R. (1975). *Hindu-Muslim relations in British India : a study of controversy, conflict, and communal movements in northern India 1923–1928*. Leiden: Brill. p. 3. ISBN 9789004043800.
- E News Aryasamaj website 2 March 2010. Accessed 3 February 2017
- Dayanand Saraswati Himalaya publishing documents.
- Sharma R. N and Sharma R. K. *Problems of Education in India* Atlantic 2006 p. 356 ISBN 817156612X.
- "10 Principles of Arya Samaj - English & Hindi". *Arya Samaj India*. 5 September 2015. Retrieved 21 April 2020.
- Morgan, Kenneth W. (Editor); Sharma, D.S.; et al. (1987). *The Religion of the Hindus* (Reprint. ed.). Delhi: M. Banarsidass. p. 199. ISBN 978-8120803879. Retrieved 26 April 2020.
- Retrieved on 18.05.2020- <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Arya-Samaj>



Thank You