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Day - 12
ETHICS

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Question:

Discuss the relevance of Gandhi Ji's "Seven Social Sins" in the Contemporary Society. Let us try to discuss the whole concept in Detail:

Answer:

Introduction:

Mahatma Gandhi is universally accepted as an exemplary model of ethical and moral life, with a rare blending of personal and public life, the principles and practices, the immediate and the eternal. He considered life to be an integrated whole, growing from 'truth to truth' every day in moral and spiritual status. He firmly believed that life could not be compartmentalized. According to him, actions, and the reasons on which actions are based, whether they be political, economic or social, are interrelated, and that these actions have a direct bearing upon the achievement of the ultimate aim of life.

The "7 Social Sins"

In 1925, in his newspaper "Young India", he published a comprehensive list of behaviors, "Seven Social Sins" that cause serious harm to society. Even in today's modern world, these Seven Social Sins poses threat to weaken the society.

1. **Politics without Principle:** Politics driven by greed, dishonesty, power hunger undermines the social welfare and leads to corrupt practices like tax evasion, nepotism, political bribery, unjust financing of political parties etc. It's common to criticize politicians and label them as corrupt, and to use this as an excuse to not participate in politics. However, we often forget that we're part of that group of people ourselves. If the system is maintained, it's because of our own action or inaction.
2. **Wealth without Work:** This refers to the practice of getting something for nothing. The nature of human beings is to want things fast and with a minimum of effort. Nowadays people are making wealth by unfair means such as tax evasion, scams, insider trading etc. The Coalgate scam, Commonwealth scam, Adarsh housing society scam is few examples. But on the contrary; wealth is also gained by people who inherit it by birth as well. But, to sustain that wealth as well work is an important criterion.
3. **Pleasure without Conscience:** Happiness that is earned at the expense of others is no less than a sin. Pleasure without conscience encourages habits without moral reasoning and it is one of the key temptations for today's society. An adult having an alcoholic beverage at social gathering may add to his pleasure. But driving after that drink crosses the boundary of responsible behavior and puts him, and others, at risk. Other examples: Sexual harassment, mindless consumerism etc.
4. **Knowledge without Character:** As dangerous as a little knowledge is, even more dangerous is much knowledge without a strong, principled character. Without character knowledge www.YouTube.com/SleepyClasses 2 www.SleepyClasses.com can be used for destructive purposes. Example: terrorism, cyber-terrorism etc.
5. **Commerce without Morality:** Economic systems without moral foundation will create an amoral society and business. It would result in over-exploitation of one particular section of the community at the cost of another. Example: forced displacement of tribal communities for business opportunities. Over exploitation of resources by industries has resulted in disturbed ecological balance, leading to alarming climate change issue.

6. **Science without Humanity:** While science serves humanity in principle but we have seen many instances where it does not. In modern world, when science and technology is used to improve the quality of life, there is a section of society which uses digital technologies like social networking sites for propagation of social & religious hatred.
7. **Religion without Sacrifice:** True religion is based on spirituality, love, compassion, understanding, and appreciation of each other. Nowadays, religion has been reduced to mere practices and rituals. True worship demands sacrifice not just in terms of the number of times a day we say our prayers, but in how sincere we are in translating those teachings into lifestyles to serve the needs of other people by sacrificing our own pride and prejudice, among other things.

Conclusion

These are the Seven Social Sins that Gandhiji warned us about and took us to the baseline by reminding that everything needs to be in order and balance. His teachings emphasized on the fact that a person should achieve his goals by putting his principles into action and using his moral strength like a suit of armor for the upliftment of society.