

**DR. AMBEDKAR'S LIFE AND HIS MISSION****Dharmendra Kumar Verma**

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Ambedkar is prolific writer a renowned economist, an assiduous anthropologist and sociologist, an eminent constitutional lawyer, a foremost social reformer, a profound thinker like Martin Luther to Protestant Christians', the brightest star and jewel of India. He was a profound thinker like Karl Marx, and Rousseau and that tribe, profound visionary and a nationalist to the core...., he had shown that birth in penury would stand no handicap for anyone dedicated to scale the heights of intellectual excellence by dint of hard work, assiduity, courage of intellectual conviction, honesty and relentless pursuit.

Greatness of a great person can be measured by the relation what one professes and what is truth, what one professes and how much of it one applies to oneself, and what effect one's words and deeds have on the society at large. in order to enhance human wisdom, it is imperative that we keep on assessing the greatness of the great men of the past – not with intent to idolize, glamorize or demean them, but to unravel the hidden truth, if any, and to gauge the long term effect of that person deeds on society. This historical wisdom shows the path of progress to the new generations and gives them opportunity to choose their ideals.

The latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be indisputably credited with giving birth to some of the greatest sons to mother India who rose and shone like shining stars during the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the otherwise dark skies of the country. During this period the resurgence of feeling of patriotism, nationalism and societal justice and effort to translate those feeling into action was unique and unparalleled Baba Sahab Bhimrao Ambedkar was one of the brightest stars among them and despite having been born in the most under privileged circumstances, he grew brighter and brighter with age and illuminated the minds of millions with truth even if harsh and unpalatable. He was a multi-faceted personality and due to his sharp intellect, clarity of vision, integrity of thought and unadulterated courage to speak the truth he excelled in all fields that he chose to tread in.

His greatness is percolating gradually in the minds of the people of his country and abroad. His sympathy towards downtrodden and untiring effort to ameliorate their condition was beyond comparison. All right thinking Indians accept him to be an intellectual giant an accomplished economist, a social scientist, jurist and humanist. He was the prime architect of our constitution .it would be an affront to the wisdom of future generation to state that were no infirmities in his perception and projection; and whatever he thought, said or did and the consequence thereof, could not be subjected to scrutiny. So the need of the hour is to develop the incisive wisdom of a historian as defined by Baba Sahab Ambedkar himself.

“A historian ought to be exact, sincere and impartial; free from passion, unbiased by internal resentment or affection; and faithful to the truth, which is the mother of history, the enemy of oblivion, the witness of the past, and the director of the future.”



## Early Life & Mission

He was born in an untouchable family, his mother had died at his tender age of six years, he was married at an early age and he had to face penury as his father had retired a few years after his birth and had remarried. The incidents that made him realize that he was untouchable and so below the status of even the cattle were too frequent and too painful in his life. To quote one among them: one day he was caught drinking water from a public water course and was thrashed badly for the same. Because of these reason and psychological reactions thereof, he had not done too well in high school examination and barely managed to pass the examination, yet he had an unquenchable thirst to read and his sensing this father decided to pursue his studies further. fortunately, the benevolent maharaja of Baroda, highly impressed with the intellect of Bhim, sanctioned scholarship to him which took him to the land of opportunities, I e. United States of America for higher studies.

He was deeply affected by insults hurled on him due to his caste, but they did not make him sulk and shy away from understanding the deep-rooted causes of them and then openly condemning them and exhorting his fellow beings to rise against them. Even as a small child he was undaunted one day he was challenged by his classmate to go to school without umbrella and took up the gauntlet and went to school in soaking rain and chill. Even Pendse who was a Brahmin teacher was deeply moved and asked his son to take him home to get him dry and provided a cloth to cover his body. He had wide vision of life and such an audacity to overcome adversities that the bitterness of his experiences in life only made him stronger and stronger to strive for the annihilation of their cause. He is a saga of development of one's personality in geometrical progression.

Although being a genius Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had pertinent views on many subjects, all of which cannot be discussed in a short article like this, hence. An attempt will be made here to deliberate on some of his more famous pronouncements and acts. Religion and rationality: Dr. Ambedkar's views on religion and its applicability to our lives put him in the category of the greatest Rationalists and humanist that the world has ever produced .to quote a few of them.

“Religion must mainly be a matter of principles only .it cannot be a matter of rules. the moment it degenerates into rules, it ceases to be a religion, as it kills the responsibility which is an essence of a true religious act ..... , Sovereignty of scriptures of all religions must come to an end if we want to have a united integrated India.”

History of religion reveals that there is no doubt that it is the Sovereignty of scriptures which has been the cause of many wars, terrorist acts and senseless killings of innocent people throughout the world. Yet Dr. Ambedkar considered Religion necessary for peaceful and progressive existence of society and declared.

“Some people think that religion is not essential to the society. I do not hold this view. Foundation of the religion is essential to the society... at the roots of the Hindu social system lies dogma prescribed in the manuscript. Such being the case I do not think it is possible to abolish inequalities in the Hindu society unless foundation of the Smriti religion is removed



and a better one laid in I, however, despair of Hindu society, being able to reconstruct itself on such a better foundation,” this despair of Dr. Ambedkar had real foundation is no secret to any dispassionate observer of Hindu society.

### **Annihilation of Castes**

For the sake of solitary and unity in the country Dr Ambedkar desired a social union as much as a political union in the Indian society. He was aware of the fragility of a politically union sans social union and stated that, without social union, political unity is difficult to be achieved. It would be as precarious as a sapling, liable to be uprooted by the gust of a hostile wind .... A political majority is open. The door to communal majority is closed. The politics of political majority is free to all to make or unmake. The politics of communal majority is made by own members born in it.

Dr. Ambedkar was clear in his mind that so long as there is caste in Hinduism, the social unity cannot be achieved. His treatise on annihilation of caste is superb in its analysis of the social system and desirability to abolish the caste in order to bring social unity. He wrote “the idea of hoping to remove untouchability without destroying the caste system is an utter futility. The underlying idea that caste and untouchability are two different things is founded on fallacy. The two are one and are inseparable .... The untouchability will vanish only when the whole of the hindu social order, particularly the cast system, will be dissolved ...., Nothing can be built on the foundation of caste. Neither a nation foundation on, nor a morality. Anything built on the foundation of caste will crack and will never be a whole. Caste prevents mobilization. Indeed, the density of a defeat which has been the lot of India throughout history is due to caste.”

### **Dalits Emancipation**

The most eminent mission of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar life was undoubtedly the unshackling of the bondages and upliftment of the depressed castes among Hindus. He was of the view that is possible only through attainment of political power.

Dr. Ambedkar was as much a doer as a thinker and fiercely and ceaselessly fought for capture of this law making power by the depressed classes. He organized Mahad satyagrah inspite great risk to himself personality and to the member of his community. He fought for separate electorate for the depressed as he thought that the representatives elected by joint elected would not whole heartedly fight for the cause of dalits. Due to Mahatma Gandhi’s fast unto death against the communal award, Dr. Ambedkar did not succeed in securing a separate electorate for the dalits yet he got more seats for dalits by way of reservation in legislature .as chairman of the committee to draft the Indian constitution, he ensured provision of reservation in legislature for 10 years (initially). Moreover, reservation in recruitment of scheduled caste / scheduled tribes to various services was also provided in the constitution. this ensured entry of dalits in the administration machinery which implements the polices, greatly influences the political leadership in the government in forming its policies.



## Religion

Dr Ambedkar, who had suffered the indignities and disadvantaged thrust on him for having been born an untouchable Hindu, had fearlessly and unequivocally denounced its such tenets which created exploitative inequalities among various castes and exhorted the depressed classes to change their religion in the following words:

“Religion for man and not man for religion. If you want to organize consolidate and be successful in this world, change this religion. The religion that does not recognize you as a human being does not give you water to drink, or allow you to enter into temple is not worthy to be called a religion. The religion that forbids you to receive education, and comes in the way of your material advancement is not deserving of application religion. The religion that does not teach its followers to show humanity in dealing with coreligionists is nothing but a display of force ... the religion that compels ignorant to be ignorant and the poor to be poor is not a religion but a visitation.

Yet, as he was a true nationalist and had incisive wisdom to foresee the effect of dogma of various religion, he was appalled on hearing that the scheduled caste was not allowed to come to Hindustan from newly created Pakistan and were being forcibly converted to Islam. In spite of his disaffection with Hinduism, he advised his people:

“I would like to tell the scheduled caste who happen today to be impounded inside Pakistan to come over to India by such means as may be available to them. the second thing I want to say is that it would be fatal for the scheduled castes, whether in Pakistan or in Hyderabad, to put their faith in Islam or the Muslim league. It has become a habit with the scheduled caste to look upon the Muslims as their friends simply because they dislike Hindus. thus is a mistaken view.”

He warned the scheduled caste in Hyderabad not to side with the Nizam and bring disgrace upon the community by siding with one who was the enemy of India. (the free press journal, 28 November 1947)

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was brought up in a Hindu family and according to Hindu traditions. In his heart he was a religious person. He criticized and later condemned Hindustan for the inhabit graded inequality in its caste system; yet it is interesting to observe that he did not change his religion till the fag end of his life. in order to fulfill self-realization and to bring liberty, equality and fraternity among the depressed classes, he exhorted them to convert to Buddhism of the apparently he converted to Buddhism on date 14 October 1956 mainly because of the obstinacy of upper caste is not assimilating the dalits among them on equal terms.

### Future of Dalits Society

Reservation for scheduled caste /scheduled tribes in recruitment and promotions in government services has ensured their easy entry into the bureaucracy. Many literary, social and political groups have been formed among dalits to further the cause espoused by Ambedkar and capture political power. special provisions for SCs/STs in education have

vastly helped in increasing their enrolment at primary level as well as in providing higher education to them. Among various government services SC /ST group and unions have also come up which are very active in furthering the interests of scheduled caste / scheduled tribe employees: BAMCEF and DS4 are noteworthy among them. Propelled by the government officials covertly, the conversion of sc to Buddhism is gaining momentum day to day

Therefore, it can be confidently concluding today that Ambedkar has succeeded greatly in his mission to uplift his community; however, a fair critique of the effect of Dr. Ambedkar labors on the future of the nation as a whole require consideration of many factor and the circumstance Dr. Ambedkar had proclaimed attempt to uplift my community rather than win swraj for the nation is my goal. There is no doubt that the then Hindu society provided enough grounds for an angry dalits to prefer liberation from the shackles of caste over attainment of swraj for the nation, yet one cannot overlook the truth that without swraj the conditions of neither the duties nor others would have improved substantially.

If British concerned to pass laws granting social equality and reservation in legislature and government services to dalits the country would not have progressed enough economically to bring any substantial change in the education, occupation and status of Dalits. Moreover, the bondage of foreign yoke would have kept along with other servile and lacking in self pride.

He wanted implementation of communal award and separate electorate for dalits as he had his reasons for not trusting upper caste voters to send such representative to the legislature as would speak for the welfare of dalits. Although in order to save fasting Mahatma's Gandhi life, he had relented on this issue but later he criticized Mahatma's dubious ways of pressurizing him his followers term Mahatma's tactics as Kshadyantra against the dalits however today the efficacy or the absence thereof of separate electorate can be seen in Pakistan, where Hindus have a separate electorate. the truth is that Hindus there have little or no voice in governance which has resulted in their systematic dwindling in number as well as social status. a separate electorate necessarily generates a feeling of being a separate nation; and Mahatma Gandhi rightly apprehended such a consequence, if separate electorate on caste / communal lines were granted.

He was all for annihilation castes which is certainly necessary to bring social equality and unity. yet he made provisions in the constitution for reservation in legislature and government services on the basis of caste alone. how can caste be abolished so long as this remains the sole basis for grabbing power and jobs? The truth is that such caste based reservation have divided the entire society and the bureaucracy in competing caste groups which care more for their castes than for public good. further more and more castes are competing fiercely for inclusion in the most beneficial reservation list irrespective of any ground reality with respect to their eligibility for the same. Fight between among Minas and Gujars in Rajasthan, inclusion of Jats among O.B.Cs in U. P. and recommendation of previous U.P. Government to include many more caste in the scheduled caste list are some of the glaring examples.



Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is beyond question and beyond compare and so are his success in the mission to uplift the dalits the consequence of his more noteworthy action, although unintended will most likely prove to be divisive and disastrous for the nation in the long run.

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