



Life and Philosophy of Dr. B.R Ambedkar's for Mankind

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Dr. Ambedkar's life

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's life was a crusade for social, economic and political justice of the downtrodden. His life was a great saga of suffering, sacrifice and struggle. As a student, as a lecturer, as a social thinker and as a political leader, he faced heavy odds, onslaughts and humiliations. From childhood onwards he had tasted of caste tyranny, obscurantism, oppression and unbearable agony. In every stage Ambedkar rebelled and fought against these pernicious and inhuman facets of Hindu society. Ambedkar had some unique qualities like courage, conviction, discipline, hardwork, deep study, scholarship, single-minded devotion, dedication, sacrifice and selfless service that helped him to carry the message of a Messiah to the downtrodden and the suppressed mankind in the country.¹ After 2500 years his voice only awakened the sleeping millions of people in Indian continent. His path gave the clarion call to the poor and innocent masses to shake off the shackles and break the barriers.

Dr. Ambedkar led satyagrahas to assert human rights. He advocated three traits: educate, organize and agitate. Indeed the first principle will provide rational thought, the second principle will give mental/physical strength and third principle will lead to fight for human rights, be it man or woman. In Indian continent after 'Buddha' he was the only scholar who had raised the questions against the traditional and conservatism, like 'Socrates'.

Naturally Dr. Ambedkar has left a permanent impression both on our Constitution and on social life. He was a great patriot. He said, "So long as we have these differences of Hindu, Muslim and others, or Sindhi, Madrasi etc, we can never develop our nationality".² He also stated that it was essential for us to think that we belong to one country. Indeed Dr. Ambedkar dedicated his life and sacrificed his potentialities for emancipation of people.

The life history of Dr. Ambedkar epitomized the relentless struggle of downtrodden community in our country against social ostracism and economic oppression.³ Dr. Ambedkar dedicated his life for search of knowledge. He had single-minded devotion to the cause of bringing up the unprivileged and downtrodden sections of the society. Dr. Ambedkar represented a dedicated spirit, an uncompromising faith in the justice of the cause he fought for. His power of appeal, his capacity for clear expression and sincerity with which he put across his point of view always command, respect and attention.

Dr. Ambedkar had sound personality in different spheres of his life. Besides so many difficulties and humiliations in childhood, adolescent stages and in profession, he always followed his self-control and right attitude. He never tried to create unwanted situations in his Marathon struggle at any cost. It shows his balanced personality i.e., his courage, self-confidence, will power and fearless ness (towards evil and inhuman) were the major characteristics of his personality. "He had rare ability to reduce the most complex questions to simple terms. He was a man of strong likes and dislikes: His mind was basically logical with will power of penetrating analysis and a gift of clever thinking. Dr. Ambedkar was so energetic and had such a strong will that he faced every eventually with

courage and determination. Like a valiant fighter he always went forward and forward and never looked backward. He had immense organizing capacity, a tribute to his strength as well as will power. He was not daunted and discouraged by any difficulties and danger. He maintains the same energy and resolutions under all circumstances".⁴

. Ambedkar was a great thinker. Generally thinker always searches for knowledge. But Ambedkar had search for knowledge, search for truth in religion and in social life. Knowledge is part in wisdom. In 500 BC Socrates said, "I am lover of wisdom". In 20th century Dr. Ambedkar had remained as 'Lover of Knowledge' and 'Lover of Wisdom' throughout his life. No scale is enough to calculate his knowledge and wisdom. "In wisdom, intellect and insight Dr. Ambedkar was par excellence. He had so many digress to his credit, his pilgrimage in search of knowledge to flung countries like America, U.K. and Germany. He studied thousands of books on all subjects that had made him an ocean of knowledge and wisdom. No wonder, the Indian universities felt little and shy before him. Dr. Ambedkar as a scholar was conferred upon him the honorary degrees of L.L.D. and D. Litt, by the Columbia University, New York (U.S.A) and the Osmania University (Hyderabad) India respectively".⁵ Dr. Ambedkar sacrificed his knowledge and wisdom for the sake of liberty of people, equality of human beings and fraternity of individual and nation.

Dr. Ambedkar was a bookworm and devotional reader. He believed education is only key and solution for all religions and social evils. He advocated education would help the individual life in the nature as a human unlike animals. The secret of his vast knowledge and wisdom was reading and reading books. The maximum time was spent for reading books. None could encroach upon his time. The individual time is selfish but to Ambedkar time was knowledge. To Ambedkar love of books was the greatest means of education and self-development. His motto was Ancora Imparo. His thirst for knowledge was that of an empire. Dr. Ambedkar's "thirst for books was ever growing and flowing like the ever-flowing Ganges. He had purchased thousands of books and had collected some rare books. Dr. Ambedkar stated on his personal library in some occasion that: If I lose my library I would lose my life"⁶ Books were the breath of Ambedkar's life.

Dr. Ambedkar was a Messiah of the depressed, suppressed and downtrodden people. He created a mission to fight for their human rights. His message, speeches, statements, ideas acted as stimulus to think about self-respect, self-dignity and self-confidence and also helped to come out from inferiority complex. Dr. Ambedkar was a saviour of individual from bondage, slavery, and inhumanity. He said the society has tyranny, authority and denial of liberty, equality and justice. Dr. Ambedkar was an emancipator. The main aim and mission of his life was to try to lead the depressed classes towards a higher social, political and economic status and to free from Dark Age.

"He was known as regenerator of their spirit and the inaugurator of the self-respect movement among the depressed classes. He made them conscious of their united strength and their power to vote. He organized them and led them to agi-

tate in a peaceful manner for the vindication of their 'rights'. "Education, organization and agitation" were the key words of his self-respect movement. He had aroused and awakened them against social injustice and installed them the spirit of self-reform, self-emanicipation, self-reliance, self-respect, and self-confidence. Dr. Ambedkar tried to free their minds from inhibition and inferiority complex".⁷

Dr. Ambedkar's Philosophy

Dr. Ambedkar was a true socialist. In his book *State and Minorities* he wrote industries, which are basic and key industries, shall be owned and run by the state, insurance shall be the monopoly of the state, agriculture shall be a state industry. He advocated "the land shall be let out to villagers without distinction of caste or creed and in such manner that there will be no land lord, no tenant and no landless labourers". In view of the social and political injustice, he said, "How it could be possible for any future Govt. which believes in doing justice socially, economically and politically, unless economy is a socialistic economy". Dr. Ambedkar's opinion on labour that labour must have both equality as well as liberty and a constitution which balances both can be the only ideal constitution from the point of labour. In other words, "the economic structure of society which would serve the interest of labour best is socialism".⁸ He was opposed to both capitalism and communism; through his speeches and writings, he pleaded for the establishment of "state socialism" through parliamentary democracy.⁹

Dr. Ambedkar was a lover of democracy and a true democrat. He believed that the true democracy will be available only through political democracy. Throughout his life he fought relentlessly to establish a society in India based on the democratic ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Dr. Ambedkar's emphasis on secularism as the only way to solve the minority problems on a more rational basis as a part in democracy. He had all along pleaded for democratic planning as the means to achieve the social equality. According to Dr. Ambedkar freedom of a country does not mean freedom of geographical unit. The social and economical uplift of the depressed classes was consistent with his claim for the independence of the country. Dr. Ambedkar believed that, "without social conscience" democracy loses its soul and there cannot be any social conscience, unless there is social democracy. Where there is no social democracy even the "Fundamental Rights" become trappings of democracy.¹⁰ Dr. Ambedkar did not accept the democracy, where there are only privileges for some and disabilities for the majority of others. He stated, "A democratic form of Govt. presupposes a democratic form of society".

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was an extensive modern philosopher. He did not confine to any single school in his philosophical approach. We can find out multi schools in his idea, thought, vision, practice and implementation. His philosophy is not narrow based, it is a broad based. The ultimate goal of his philosophy is justice for humankind.

Philosophy explains "The nature of the universe and man's position and prospects in it".¹¹ According to Dr. Ambedkar "Philosophy is nothing but a standard to measure the conduct of man".¹² He also took philosophy as "human experience", which studies and explains the world-process and the world-ground with regard to man. He said "philosophy is an analysis and interpretation of the experience in question in its bearing upon our view of man and the world in which he lives.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a great idealistic. Patience and forbearance were rare principles of his philosophy. He treated every human being kindly, his speech was kindly and his heart was full of love and compassion for the masses. The main aim of idealism is to attain *Sumum Bonum* i.e., highest good or truth: Dr. Ambedkar took more than twenty years to investigate the truth. Finally he satisfied himself fully that the Dhamma was a right path: Dr. Ambedkar was a vivid Rationalist. He believed philosophy and education would generate

rational thought. His rationalism was basis of Reason and he raised so many questions i.e., what, where, how, when and why against the existence of God (Rama and Krishna) and social evils (Varna & Caste). He exhorted the people to know about the human life rather than the existence of god and Atma. His rational thought always denied the dogmas. He accepted, reality is found in the series of questioning, unlike belief. Rationalism in Ambedkar has been an expression of great confidence in human reason. Rationalism is one of the early results of his independent thinking, which brings him very near to naturalism. Reason will help experience. Dr. Ambedkar had high confidence on human reason, which helps man come out from darkness to enlightenment.

Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy is also considered as Naturalism. He was a Naturalist in 20th Century. Some time Naturalism is also called as Materialism. Nature or matter is real and permanent. It gives material results. Dr. Ambedkar categorically explains human beings need material results in social structure rather than the spiritual results. Nature provide, liberty, equality for all human beings irrespective of caste, colour, creed and sex. But only society has made authority and tyranny over individual life. Dr. Ambedkar vehemently condemned the authority of Hindu society, which consists of social evils like inequality, injustice, discrimination and inhuman. Not only Hindu society but also any society that maintains these evils as a part of their social structure drew strong opposition from Ambedkar. He advocated human rights, which are part in the natural rights and in nature. These rights are essential for all human beings without discrimination of caste, and sex. He denied the authority of man over woman and man over man. His philosophy concentrates its attention upon the analysis of the nature and causes of social and moral evils. According to him for a long time human society has been committed to radically false tradition and ideals. "In his philosophy liberty destroys equality and absolute equality leaves no room for liberty. He gives the highest place to fraternity as the only real safeguard against the denial of liberty, equality and fraternity, which is another name for brotherhood or humanity".¹³

Dr. Ambedkar like Rousseau was treated as anti-social and anti-religion by traditional Hindu society. However, Dr. Ambedkar was a Pragmatist. Pragmatism is another school of his philosophy. To pragmatism action is more important than thought or idea. Utility is the main criterion and experience (i.e., human experience) that occupied prime place in it. He called upon the masses to do action and hard work rather than the sit ideally and follow other's opinions and beliefs. Dr. Ambedkar wished human action must help to fulfill the materialistic welfare or need of the people. He believed human hard work, would enrich the quality of life. It helps change his /her conditions from time to time. He was never confined to the ideas, which consisted of imaginary things without human welfare. He emphasized on human experience. The human experience will guide him towards utility, either social, political, economical utility.

He was an exemplar of his philosophy. He proved that by thought, hard work and character one could compete on equal terms with others. In his social, political and spiritual philosophy whatever he thought, he preached and practiced in-toto by doing hard work and action. In his philosophical life "a combination of thought and action helped him in many ways. His philosophical approach is to revitalize thoughts and things for the good of man and society".¹⁴

Dr. Ambedkar was a real humanist. His humanism was, to begin with, a sharp reaction to the inhumanity of man to man, of class to class in a society. According to Dr. Ambedkar any philosophy or Ism is good and acceptable if it is meant for human welfare. His humanism is called as 'social humanism' "this humanism stands for the fact that whatever is true for the human being must serve human interest and not interest of any supernatural being. The results and benefits of humanism, which all reach the door of each and every human being living in human society". Dr. Ambedkar did not ignore individu-

al human interest, because it tends essentially to give way to social humanism. All things can be true only when they work for all men ultimately. His knowledge, intellectual highness, thoughts and actions were sacrificed for the people who are living in gloomy social conditions. Nature is free from all evils and bondages. Throughout life he had been fought for human rights and fundamental rights, which are essential for all human beings, who live in the nature. His humanism not only for India sub-continent people but also for each and every individual who live in the world society.

Dr. Ambedkar created human rights for all and tried to bring all men on a par socially. His aim was not communal and related to personal benefit, but it was essentially social and human related to all who suffered from slavery, injustice, tyranny and exploitations. Dr. Ambedkar recognized the social stigma of woman in Hindu society. He felt the need of women human rights. That's why he introduced Hindu-code bill in Indian Parliament in 1956.

Dr. Ambedkar was a realist and had a strong idealism. "The root of his philosophy was not in politics but in religion. His philosophy was such as would facilitate the social revolution in India. The social idealism and political idealism were opposed to each other. The political idealism scarified freedom and equality but social idealism had described them : Dr.Ambedkar wished that the political idealism of the majority would become the social idealism of all".¹⁵ Dr. Ambedkar strongest ideal society, which consists of social liberty, social equality and social justice rather than political idealism.

Dr. Ambedkar's philosophical attitude was a combination

of Naturalism and Humanism. To Naturalism nothing exists other than-nature. To Humanism, human beings presence is essential only but not supernatural things. Dr. Ambedkar did not deny the truth of nature, but he believed man is essentially a free human being.

Dr. Ambedkar was a liberator. His libertarianism was combined with rationalism and pragmatism. His ethics were utilitarian; his scales of values were determined by the usefulness of an action towards establishment of liberty and equality in the social order.

Observations and suggestions

- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is a father of social justice.
- He is a modern human rights thinker and practitioner.
- He is a role model to all in terms of pains and pleasures.
- He is a realist thinker and led life with practical.
- He is a man of courage and devotion.
- He is a lighting lamp to the society.
- His foot prints are permanent on Indian soil.
- He is a lover of nature and human rights.
- He was born for knowledge only.
- His views will be continued and permanent forever.
- The Indian society should think about all citizens in terms that all are equal before Nature and try to accept the philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.
- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar ideology i.e., equality and equity should provide all people without any discrimination.
- All new babies should born, live and survive in Indian society without any fear and discrimination, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar philosophy should imbibe in all personalities, particularly in students.

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