

B.R. Ambedkar : Hero of the common Masses

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The untouchables comprised a number of distinct groups which form the lowest strata of Hindu society. Their touch, shadow and even voice were deemed by the caste Hindus to be polluting . These untouchable Hindus were denied the use of Public wells , and were condemned to drink any filthy water they could find . Their children were not admitted to schools attended by the upper caste Hindu children . Though they worshipped the gods of Hindus. Several worthy sons of India have made from generation to generation energetic attempts to free Hindu society from this evil system which was degraded , segregated and devitalised it . In the succeeding centuries saints like Ramanand , Kabir , Tukaram , Chaitanya succeeded to a great extent in establishing equality in matters of their Bhakti cult . The eighteen nineties had seen the trampling march of a tremendous epoch in Maharashtra . A social political revival had set in . Those were the flaming days of social reformers and eager political agitation. This was the social and political situation in Maharashtra and India on the eve of the birth of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar.

Under the pressure of all sorts of such disabilities and maltreatment attendant on the birth of an untouchable and humble rank , Bhim was cultivating a spirit of patience . Freedom of discussion and meeting was slowly extinguished , champions of these rights and freedom were denounced by government as seditious dealer . This state of repression must have agitated the strong currents of Bhimrao Ambedkar's mind . The Maharaja of Baroda decided to send Bhimrao along with three other students for higher education at columbia university. Life in America was a unique and moving experience in Ambedkar's life. He could read, he could write , he could rest with a status of equality . His life gleamed with a new meaning. After completing his studies he reached Bombay on Aug 21, 1917. He worked as professor , Lawyer , private tutor , as an accountant but it failed when his clients know that he was an untouchable . The insults and humiliations were goading him to go to the root of the trouble. He was trying to infuse life in to the dead cells and fanning the live ones into a glow

In Maharashtra Maharaja of Kolhapur wanted to eradicate the barriers created by the caste system and to emancipate the lower classes from the dominance of the Brahmins . In 1919 , Ambedkar came in contact with the Maharaja, with the financial help from Raja he started his paper title Mook

Nayak . He wrote that India was a home of inequality . Hindu society , consisted of three parts : the Brahmins , the Non – Brahmins and the untouchables . He said that it was not enough for India to be an independent country . India must rise as a good state guaranteeing equal status in matters religious , social , economic and political to all classes . Ambedkar well known that the law of social reforms is that they come speedily not from the efforts of philanthropists , but from the organised self – assertion on the part of the sufferers themselves . He diagnosed the disease correctly . He know that injustice is not removed till the sufferer himself does away with it by his own exertions and actions . As long as the conscience of a slave does not burn , there is no hope for salvation . The new leader of the untouchables had no faith in democracy and independence . His study of Indian history had taught him that benevolent kings and magnificent kingdoms had flourished in the land , but his people were always treated like lepers . It was Ambedkar’s aim to prepare his people’s head , hearts and hands to secure Man’s right and to make them real men , out of sixty million slaves . Ambedkar prepared himself in March 1924 to launch his social movement for the uplift of the untouchables. He convened a meeting on March 9, 1924 . After discussion it was resolved that an institution be established ‘Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha’ was founded on July 20 , 1924 . Under the direction of Sabha there were a free reading room in Bombay and a Mahar Hockey club , started in the hope of persuading the untouchables to set their faces against gambling drinking and unhealthy ways of recreations. He showed utmost cheerfulness towards his people . He treated them with care and cordiality. The poor people were struck with a sense of overwhelming gratitude by his simplicity and sincerity.

The sun of self respect had now arisen in the sky and the clouds of oppression had begun to flit away . Ambedkar was now exorcising the spirit of despair from the minds of the dumb millions who had been forced to live the lives of sub human beings. Here was a liberator preaching them self elevation is not achieved by the blessings of others but only by one’s own struggle and deed. He was now inspiring them to do battle for their human rights. Under the leader ship of their saviour , the down trodden and dumb millions opened a new chapter in the annals of India . They not only voiced their age long grievances but also took on themselves energetically to mitigate them . They realised the importance of organization and active struggle. Ambedkar, the social revolutionary , urged the depressed classes to act in a forcible a way to let Hindus know that to observe untouchability was a risk . These caste Hindus would not understand paper resolutions or appeals made at conferences. He said that it was a struggle for cultural predominance . Nothing could be achieved if they did not adopt an aggressive attitude and prove by their thought , words and deeds that they would not now tolerate insult and disabilities any

further . Ambedkar warned government many times that if it prevented the depressed classes from exercising their legitimate rights , the matter would be referred to the league of Nations

Ambedkar know well that the more the education, the more the chances for progress and the easier the opportunities for his people. He thought that by investing his people with political equality and political problem, the problem of their education would be automatically solved through governmental efforts and agencies, he devoted his time and talent more to securing political rights than to securing educational uplift. The dead cells of the Depressed classes were filled with new energy , new blood and new inspiration . He urged his people to devote their energies to gaining political power . Ambedkar said, you should care more for your material good than for spiritual food . He appeal to Dalit masses, “ To act and utilise what little political power is coming into your hands . He warned his people to keep themselves aloof from internal quarrels . On October 28, 1932, he warned his people not to get themselves lost in the temple entry movement and inter dining. He told them that the problem of bread and butter would not be solve by it .

Ambedkar told that there was three problems before them . The first was whether they would be ever given an equal status in Hindu society, the second was whether they would get the proper share of national wealth and the third was what would be the fate of the self respect, self help movement. He advised the untouchables to embrace any other religion that would regard them as human beings, give them as opportunity to rise in the world and enable them to act, eat walk and live like men . He asked the students to not take part in politics during their school days and asked them to create value and worth for their say . He encouraged them to have a purpose in life and to accomplish it by their own industry and perseverance . His message to his people was that they should drive endlessly sacrifice the present pleasures for a great future .

The first renaissance of Hinduism was inaugurated by the Upanishads with their stream of new thought . Ambedkar’s movement saw the fifth phase of the renaissance of Hinduism and reorganization of the Hindu social order . Ambedkar came of a family whose hundred forefathers were treated in this land worse than dogs , whose touch was regarded as a pollution and whose shadow a sacrilege . He achieved what was above the ambition , beyond the dream of men of his community . He shaped the life of sixty million people . He wrote his name on the future of this country and in the history of human freedom . untouchability was abolished under the constitution of free India . Babasaheb organised , united and inspired the untouchables in India to effectively use political means towards their goal of social equality .

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