

JAI JAGAT IN THE DIRECTION OF SPIRITUAL EQUALITY

(with special reference to Acharyakul and Vinobaji)

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(1.) Aims and Objectives of Acharyakul

Acharyakul is a collective platform of people with universal love, who have taken upon themselves the responsibility to love, live, educate and restructure man and society to preserve humanity and Global security. Everybody can think of adding to the glory of such a platform.

The qualification of an Acharya

One should be avowed in one's own heart that :

(a) I shall not be fearful, or dreadful to create fear in others.

(b) I shall not be harboring myself with any label or party or special status or privilege or power or exclusive orbits. All men are equal. All men are respectable. All men's inner and outer needs are to be catered without any partiality. All life is essentially divine.

(c) I am enemy to none. None is my enemy. I shall be committed to being heartily away from or devoid of all ill feelings towards anybody. Ill feelings like wishing somebody to die, go away from my vicinity, hatred, malice, insult, slander, belittling, outcast, untouchable, worth handling roughly or crudely or inhumanely or floating or devaluating. Whatever behavior the other party offers to be temporarily or permanently, I cannot stop or stoop to levels other than of love, friendship, peace, and forgiveness. I believe in unconditional, non-reciprocal, voluntary, selfless, spontaneous, ex-Garcia friendship.

Not that these qualities can be gained in a day or a whole lifetime. But the vow of universal vouchsafing cannot be achieved without a conscious and strenuous inner discipline in these directions. At all crossroads, one has to wait and watch and take the right decision. These

three are POLE STARS for self-judgment. They are universal virtues and if declined will not only harm our self-interest but also interests of other beings. **That is the guideline given by Saint Vinoba Bhave for members of Acharyakul.** Voluntary giving oneself for selfless service for universal care and concern and is what Vinoba demands of these persons.

The local platform of such activists i.e. Acharyakul can enhance unity and brotherhood at the local level. The National platforms of such people can guide the leaders for proper policy-making to bring justice to all. The international platform of such visionaries and activists will change the course of the present crisis towards a better future for all. In time there will be a manifold increase in the number of such universal Hands-Heads-Hearts. The united efforts of their love - force will be instrumental in bringing positive changes the society and the world.

Since childhood, Vinobaji realized that if he works relentlessly to learn, understand and practice the jewels of Love and Truth from all over the world (Jai Jagat), he can create a creative mode that can guide humanity for centuries. So God and Guru blessed him with a versatile genius to achieve this aim of serving future generations of humanity with synthesis and concurrence of wisdom from the world over. It was an unparalleled gigantic task ever aimed and diligently followed by any individual in human history.

(2.) About Vinobaji Bhave

Vinoba Bhave (1895-1982) was born on September 11, 1895 in Kolaba, Maharashtra in a Chitpavan brahmin family. His early education was at Baroda. Later, he studied at Varanasi. He was interested mainly in philosophical literature. He joined Sabarmati ashram and became one of the closest associates of Gandhi. He was actively involved in the Nagpur Salt Satyagraha, the Dandi March and the Temple Entry Movement in Kerala. In 1940, he was chosen by Gandhi to be the first Satyagrahi for the individual civil disobedience movement. Vinoba Bhave set up Gandhi Ashram at Paunar and Maganwadi. He started the Bhoodan Movement after independence to enable agricultural labourers to acquire some land. He also led the Sarvodaya movement.

He was the eldest son of Narahari Shambhu Rao and Rukmini Devi. He had four other siblings, three brothers and one sister. His mother Rukmini Devi was a very religious person and instilled in Vinoba a deep sense of spiritualism. As a student Vinoba was quite fond of mathematics. He also developed a spiritual conscience quite early having studied the Bhagavad Gita under the tutelage of his grandfather.

Vinoba Bhave was a learned scholar. He knew eighteen languages (both Indian and foreign). He wrote several books, of which Gita in Marathi, Gita Pravachan in Hindi and Bhoodan Yajna has won international fame. Vinoba Bhave was awarded the Bharat Ratna posthumously. Vinayak Narahari "Vinoba" Bhave was an Indian advocate of nonviolence and human rights. He is considered as a National Teacher of India and the spiritual successor of Mohandas Gandhi.

Although a good student, traditional education never really appealed to Vinoba. He considered renouncing social life and head out to the Himalayas. On other days, he considered joining the Indian independence struggle. He started travelling the length of the country, learning regional languages along with knowledge of scriptures and Sanskrit. He ended up in the holy city of Banaras, where he came across a piece on Mahatma Gandhi, specifically about a speech he gave at the Banaras Hindu University. The course of his life was altered after he read it. He burned his entire school and college certificate on his way to Mumbai in 1916, to appear for the intermediate examination. He started corresponding with Gandhi, who being impressed with the 20-year-old Vinoba invited him to Kochrab Ashram in Ahmedabad. Vinoba met Gandhi on June 7, 1916 and took resident at the Ashram. He dutifully participated in all the activities at the ashram, leading an austere and sparse life. He eventually dedicated his life towards various programs designed by Gandhi like the Khadi Andolan, teaching, etc. The name Vinoba (a traditional Marathi epithet signifying great respect) was conferred upon him by Mama Phadke, another member of the Ashram.

(3.) Jai Jagat in the direction of spiritual Equality

Vinobaji gave a slogan "Jai Jagat" which means welfare of all i.e. Sarvodaya. Vinobaji has made a very good attempt in promoting better

understanding between Hindus and Muslims. After Maulana Azad, Vinobaji from amongst Hindus, has showed proper understanding of spirit of spirituality including Islam. Today unfortunately scholars of any religion project religion with negativities to serve political end. It is very important that scholars retrieve the original spirit of the spirituality and project the spiritual philosophy in true and proper light in a conflict torn country like India. Vinobaji has understood Islam in its own ground and has brought out the true

The attempt to understand Acharya Vinoba Bhave's views on spirituality is one of the important exercise in today's time. The world today is facing both inter-religious as well as intra-religious conflicts to such an extent that it has become absolutely important to search for a viable solution to establish peace and harmony in the society. Though it is true that almost all religions originated with this purpose, somehow during course of time it has ceased to perform this desirable function and has rather become an obstacle to peace and harmony by being one of the major sources of conflict and chaos in the society.

It is with this aim in mind we would like to look into the views of Vinobaji on spirituality which according to us is capable of resolving the conflicts by proposing a comprehensive and holistic view of spirituality. Vinoba takes up a revolutionary stand so far as the institutionalized, narrow concept of spirituality is concerned and at the same time he goes back to ancient tradition and extends a sound base for the spiritual aspect of religion which according to him is capable of uniting the whole of humanity.

For Acharya Vinoba Bhave, the Vedas are the divine revelation of the universal truth (Jai Jagat) and invaluable preachings for upliftment of human beings. In his liberal and unconventional analysis of Mantras, **Vinoba Bhave has explained the Vedic enlightenment of the topics related with glory of human labour, equality of all human beings, importance of unity and brotherhood, moral values and noble character, social harmony and well beings i.e Jai Jagat, place of Karma (action), Bhakti (devotion), Upasana (worship) and Jnana (Knowledge) in human life and such other subjects.**

He believes that the Vedic message for all round progress of mankind is Sanatana (eternal) and therefore is always relevant in any age i.e Jai Jagat. Through his painstaking analysis of many Mantras, he has ably conveyed that Vedic teaching can help us in our endeavours for attaining bright intellectual level, good health, individual and social welfare and spiritual advancement (Jai Jagat).

Gandhi and Vinoba are a continuum. There is no essential difference between their fundamental postulates. However there are some differences in strategies and emphasis. This is also corroborated because Vinoba Bhave is the most trusted disciple of Mahatma Gandhi first in the list during individual Satyagrah Movement in 1940. To add, **Mahatma Gandhi is on record to declare that as far as spiritual realization is concerned Vinobaji is ahead of him (Gandhi).** Further when conclave was held at all varieties of Gandhian after death stalwarts like- Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, U.N. Dhebar, Jayprakash Narayan, J.C. Kumarappa, Aryanaikam etc. were held to discuss the program and to select a leader to guide about the Gandhian programme he was none else than Vinoba Bhave. This is effected in his Bhudana Movement through which about 45 lacks of Acres of land was collected in the land gift mission.

Gandhi was a leader of revolution where as Vinoba's temper was mild being spiritual fellow. He believed in constructive non-violence leading to Bhudan and Gramdan Movement. Gandhi's Non-violence was dynamic. Gandhi was a prophet as vigorous mind, could take a risk. Gandhi was a martyr where as Saint Vinoba Bhave died Samadhi (Ichamarana i.e. religious and spiritual death). " Gandhi v/s Vinoba" is misleading infact we should have "Gandhi and Vinoba" continuum. Gandhi was like a prophet of peace while Vinobaji is also a pilgrim of peace and non-violence. There is remarkable affinity between the value system of both besides, there is a deep personal bond of love and faith between Gandhi, the teacher and Vinoba, the disciple.

However they have not also the similar goal of life but also identical views about the method of its realization. Infact both of them have faith in the essential goodness of Man and absolute purity of Means. Hence if there is any strategy-system it is to be adopted by both of them, it is purity of means in the beginning in the middle and also in

the end. To treat man as essentially bad or evil is not only be insult of Mankind but also pessimism par excellence.

We intend to conclude that Vinobaji's noble approach to spirituality has the capacity to bring about assimilation between different religions on one hand and between science and religion on the other hand i.e. Jai Jagat. This noble approach has a lot to offer in the same time when the society is ridden with the so called religious conflicts. Thus, we may look to Vinoba's view of spirituality with a new hope to resolve such conflicts. Vinoba was perhaps the most distinguished and erudite scholar on Sarvodaya(Jai Jagat) philosophy during the Gandhian Age. He was deeply influenced by Gandhiji's work and thought all his life. Gandhiji and vinoba were neither educationists nor education philosophers. Gandhiji developed definite thoughts on education by experimenting in providing education to his children and later on to children of the inmates of Phoenix Ashram and Tolstoy farm. Vinoba's interest in education developed in the context of his discourse on reconstruction of Sarvodaya Samaj.

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