

The Visionary and his Vision

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Human beings pass away. Their vision gets converted into a mission for others to implement. Having lost a great soul let us reflect upon how his life could be a role model to millions of us:

1. Little Avul Pakir used to look up at the sky and see airplanes from his remote village, and dream about flying in them. When he grew up he tried earnestly to become an Air Force pilot – but could not get selected. He did not give up his dream and reconciled to pursue any other career – he went on to studying aeronautical engineering. He kept his focus on his goal even after experiencing failure.
2. He joined Indian Space Research Organization as a Scientific Assistant. Progress and promotions in public sector units is slow and even frustrating at times – but he persisted till he was recognized and given higher responsibilities.
3. When he moved to Defence Research and Development Organization, he was in the midst of senior military officers. Civilians are often made to play second fiddle in Army organizations but he did not mind it, and proved his mettle.
4. He refused an offer to become Vice Chancellor of Madras University, and even the post of Union Cabinet Minister when the PM personally invited him, because he realized that he will lose touch with the scientific work he is pursuing as a passion.
5. He subsequently became Principal Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister, and had a successful stint. But at one point he resigned, since he felt he had advised enough and younger people should take over, and he also wanted to work with the youth of the country as a teacher.
6. He was unanimously selected by both the BJP and the Congress to the prestigious position of the President of the country. He excelled in the post for five years, but refused to ask for a

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second term since he wanted to work with the new generation, and gracefully stepped down.

7. He completed over eight decades in this world, and passed away peacefully doing what he loved best – addressing students in each corner of the country.

The above seven points prove that for a person to be a visionary and to be effective in inculcating the vision in others, he has to be a role model first. And that was what defined Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam, who will be remembered more for his vision and motivation than for the positions he held or honours he received.

Perhaps what set him apart was that he had immense faith in the youth and children of the nation, and firmly believed that by the time they grow up in the year 2020 we will be able to achieve phenomenal growth.

His vision covered all areas from agriculture and food processing to infrastructure, reliable electric power, taking urban amenities to rural areas, alternative energy sources, education, healthcare including telemedicine, Information and Communication Technology, e-governance, telecommunication and defence technology

To quote the great man in his own words, he said, *“I have three visions for India. In 3000 years of our history, people from all over the world have come and invaded us, captured our lands, conquered our minds. From Alexander onwards, the Greeks, the Portuguese, the British, the French, the Dutch, all of them came and*

looted us, took over what was ours. Yet we have not done this to any other nation. We have not conquered anyone. We have not grabbed their land, their culture, their history or tried to enforce our way of life on them. Why? Because we respect the freedom of others. That is why my first vision is that of FREEDOM.

“I believe that India got its first vision of this in 1857, when we started the war of independence. It is this freedom that we must protect and nurture and built on. If we are not free, no one will respect us. My second vision for India is DEVELOPMENT.

“For fifty years we have been a developing nation. It is time we see ourselves as a developed nation. We are among top 5 nations of the world in terms of GDP. We have 10 percent growth rate in most areas. Our poverty levels are falling, our achievements are being globally recognized today. Yet we lack the self-confidence to see ourselves as a developed nation, self reliant and self assured. Isn't this right?

“I have a third vision. That India must stand up to the world. Because I believe that unless India stands up to the world, no one will respect us. Only strength respects strength. We must be strong not only as a military power but also as an economic power. Both must go hand-in-hand.”

Dr. APJ exhorted children to have *“Courage to think different, Courage to invent, Courage to travel on an unexplored path, Courage to discover the impossible, Courage to combat the problems and succeed.”*

Dr. Abdul Kalam is no more with us in bodily form. But his Vision is stronger and stronger today, almost like the prophetic words of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore of the awakening of our land. In his own words APJ said:

“I climbed and climbed Where is the

peak, my Lord? I ploughed and ploughed, Where is the knowledge treasure, my Lord? I sailed and sailed, Where is the island of peace, my Lord? Almighty, bless my nation with vision and sweat resulting into happiness.”



INDIA NEEDS CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

Since ancient times India has played a prominent part in shaping the spiritual history of humanity. She has been home to avatars, prophets, masters, seers and sages whose contribution to the spiritual evolution has been unparalleled. India has also produced exemplary scientists, poets, philosophers, emperors, leaders and states men. In the past India has attained eminence to spiritual as well as mundane spheres of life.

India's place in the new world is going to be unique. It is true that the problems that India is facing today are in some ways more complicated than the problems faced by any other country. Our diversities has presented some difficulties in arriving at solidarity and concerned action in national life, but it must in no way looked be upon as a disadvantage.

The various streams of culture which have poured into the Indic region have not only created a suitable opportunity for arriving at a new cultural synthesis, but have necessitated its emergence. If handled with creative leadership, the presence of conflicting elements in Indian life can be utilized for bringing about a rich world culture, which shall not only rejuvenate and harmonise Indian life, but will also give a new tone to the life of the whole world. Since the vision that inspires the new world culture will be comprehensive, it will not negate the values of diverse traditons, nor will it have merely patronizing tolerance for them. On the contrary, it will express itself through active appreciation of the essentials diverse religions and cultures.

Creative leadership in India needs to strive for political poise despite the difficult situation in which she is placed. While leadership in India would be justified in striving for national freedom and self

determination. It must not allow itself to be vitiated by reactionary isolationism. In the same way while discharging the clear duty of resisting foreign aggression, India should try to keep free from hate, malice and revenge. Aggression should be met with resistance and here it is impractical to insist upon non-violence.

Pure non-violence or incorruptible love can come spontaneously only where duality has been completely transcended in the realization of the last and the only Truth. Non-violence of the brave is possible only for advanced souls who have through rigorous discipline eradicated from their minds all sorts of greed and hate. But so far, as the majority are concerned, it is undesirable to ask them to stick to the external formula of non-violence where it is their clear duty to resist aggression in self defense or in the defense of other weak brothers. In its enthusiasm for the highest ideal, wise leadership can in no way afford to lose all sense of the relative and practical.

All narrowness limits love. In India, as well as in every other part of the world, humanity is breaking itself into narrow groups based upon superficial and ultimately false differences of caste, creed, race, nationality, religion or culture. Creative leadership in India will have to recognize and emphasise the fact that all men are already united with one another not only by their co-partnership in the Great Divine Plan for Earth, but also by virtue of their all being equally the expression of their One Life. No line of action can be really helpful or fruitful unless it is in entire harmony with this deep Truth. The future of humanity is in the hands of those who have vision.

-Courtesy : SPEAKING TREE