

BLENDING DUTY WITH DIVINITY



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My meeting with Dr Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam, the face of 21st century India was rather preordained. It was 26th Apr, 2013 and Sambhram Group of Institutions, Bangalore was agog with commotion. It was indeed a defining moment of my life; I had a rare privilege to recite my poem –Dr Kalam, Tujhe Salam, which I had composed almost a decade ago. His Excellency was all ears to the recitation of the poem - a celebration of his simplicity, sobriety, sacrifices, trials and the triumphs of life.

Humane & Humble

It was the D- Day for thousands of students and faculties, who were vying to have a glimpse of the Saint of kalayuga. It was neither the arrival of an eminent scientist nor a visit by the Ex President of India that had created a ripple of excitement and expectation in the crowd. It was the coming of a humane and humble soul- the heartbeat of aam admi. We, the People know for sure that the President of India -past or present symbolizes pomp and power and lives a life of sheer opulence and extravagance. But here was a man so distinct and different from his predecessors; he democratized the highest post of Indian Republic by reaching out to the hoi polloi. No wonder, he has earned the sobriquet- People's President. It is equally important to note here that of late it has become a fashion to talk about the uplift of the marginalized class of society. This is as true of major political parties as of bureaucrats. Once, they manage to reach some top positions in their career, majority of them remain busy amassing wealth and building their own empire. They even tend to forget their own past struggle and moorings. These people who join the Elite Club live more for themselves. They do talk about the poor and pauper and yet remain committed to promoting their family business or serving the interests of their kith and kin. It is an irony that we often forget that human life comes as a divine gift only to salvage the lives of the meek and the miserable; they alone live who live for others.

Against this backdrop, it is sheer joy to see a silver lining amidst dark clouds. Dr kalam, who is a class by himself epitomizes values such as deeply religious and yet profoundly



secular outlook, fiery patriotism, passion for promoting scientific and technological revolution throughout India and above all his determination to champion the dreams and aspirations of a billion plus people and thus, catapult India to the comity of developed Nations by 2020. He inspires hope and 'a Wow feeling' among the teeming millions. He is among the very few Indians today who are wedded to their roots and socio-cultural matrix of the nation. One wonders how he manages to remain so humble and humane in this age of ostentatious display of money, muscles and power! We, the People of India rightly take a legitimate pride in what Dr Kalam has done for envisioning India and empowering the people of world's most eventful democracy. One is reminded of the words of Acharya Mahapragya, one of the most celebrated Jain thinkers of the world:

Kalam, God bless you for what you have done with your team. But the Almighty has a bigger mission for you.

Care & Charisma

His life is a beautiful amalgamation of care and charisma, having bracing influence upon millions of youth of the country. His contribution towards mobilizing young India can hardly be exaggerated, considering the fact that 21st century India is up against a deep crisis- a crisis of unique identity and character. It is of vital importance for us not to be basking in the past glory any more, turning a blind eye to the present. How long could India live by the past laurels? Is our society not in dire need of people with character, charisma and commitment who could guide and motivate the budding minds? Don't we desperately need leaders who are capable as well as willing to create more leaders? Are the Youth of the

country not craving to have genuine role models? But who deserve to be called true role models? This question assumes significance in view of the existing gap between those who are leaders in true sense and majority of those who are charlatans. Dr Kalam emerges as one of the tallest leaders of the Age by virtue of his virtues and struggle he made to rise in life. He faced challenges and suffered wounds. Like an ordinary mortal, he too failed and stumbled. Many a time, his mission went haywire and dreams got shattered. His failure at the Service Selection Board (SSB) could be revisited as one of the many stumbling blocks of his life. But no defeat could dampen his spirit, let alone defeat his divine purpose of life. On the contrary, every time, he suffered a setback, it only broke open the fount of wisdom. Given the perpetual trials of his formative years and the ultimate tri-

umph of his life, we cannot visualize a role model better than Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam for the youth. He is caring, understanding and yet modern. The noted existentialist writer Albert Camus once wrote these words perhaps only to help us understand the distinct type of leadership that Dr Kalam typifies today:

"Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Just walk beside me and be my friend."

Duty as Divinity

Duty is thy divinity. Three cheers to your self-ordained mission of igniting the budding Indian minds. This is the reflection of your belief in a sublime purpose of life called divinity. In the history of India, there has been no other President or a person of your stature ever wandering like a monk out to transform and vitalize the whole of India. You are right in believing:

"Trusting the universe means living with a faith that no matter how much pain you are in, or how out of control everything around you appears, all the happenings are for a reason. It is about believing in a higher purpose of life."

Dr Kalam is a Motivator and a Mentor par excellence. His words spring from the depth of truth and out of his awareness of his divine purpose which is manifest in his calling to build a New India-strong, impregnable and self-reliant that could be the envy of European Nations & Pride

of Asia. It is for us to appreciate his vision and mission. We must reciprocate and take his journey beyond. He beautifully opines:

"Work alone remains after the death of an individual. To mortals like us, immortality can become a reality only through the significant work we leave behind"

I was truly blessed to have met such a sublime and illustrious soul. I see it as the unfolding of Divine will. I am convinced everyone on this beautiful planet has a Gift to give. That gift is present in all circumstances; we must discover our Gift and share it like Dr Kalam. By discovering and sharing our gift, we can become co- authors of our destiny and create a brave new world. Let me conclude with the words of OSHO:

Each person comes into this world with a specific destiny- he has something to fulfill, some message has to be delivered, some work has to be completed. You are not here accidentally-you are here meaningfully. There is a purpose behind you. The whole intends to do something through you.

What a Gift you have been Dr Kalam to India and to humanity at large! May Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful continue to lead you on the path of Eternal Bliss & Happiness!

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