

MESSAGE OF NON-VIOLENCE & PEACE THROUGH KEKI.N.DARUWALLA POEMS

Rajani Tewari¹ & Sandeep Verma²

¹Research Scholar, Teerthanker Mahaveer University, Uttar Pradesh, India

²Associate Professor, Center for Learning Studies, Teerthanker Mahaveer University, Uttar Pradesh, India

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ABSTRACT

Through Keki. N. Daruwalla poem King speaks to his scribe. In this, we learn that Asoka was a great Emperor. He belonged to Mauryan Empire. He ruled over most part of India. He is also known for Kalinga war. This was one of the most deadliest battles ever fought in this world. In this battle millions of people were dead. After this war, he gave up his kingdom and he became non-violent. He asked his messengers to spread the message of peace all over the world. He asked them to build Stupas and write his message on it and the message should be dug deeply on it so that it can show how much he is hurt due to war. The coming future generations can read about the deadly Kalinga war and that they should learn from it not to repeat it ever because there is no use of war it's futile. As he had only conquered outside and the consequences were that he found widows wailing and children became orphans as well as there was a river of blood flowing between him and the common masses. Then he realized that one should conquer himself instead of conquering outside.

KEYWORDS: *Stupas, Futile, Deadliest, Non-Violent*

INTRODUCTION

Keki. N. Daruwalla described about Asoka and his feelings after he won Kalinga war in his poem "The King speaks to his Scribe". Through his poem, we learn that Asoka was the third ruler of the Mauryan dynasty. He was one of the most powerful Kings in human history. We can see that his reign has been one of the most prosperous periods in the history of India which had fallen between 273 and 232 A.D. He expanded his empire from India to South Asia and Afghanistan even some parts of Persia in the West to Bengal and Assam in the East and Mysore in the South.

Ashoka as a Monarch

H.G. Wells wrote of Asoka in his book that amongst all the monarchs and Kings which have ever come into this world his name shines all alone in this world like a star.

Asoka got a low position amongst all princes because of his mother's position. He had only one young brother but several elder brothers. He showed great skills in weaponry as well as education.

Early Life

Asoka was born in Mauryan Empire. His father was King Bindusara and mother Queen Devi Dharma in 304 B.C. The great Chandragupta Maurya was his Grandfather. The Emperor was the founder of the Dharma Dynasty. He was also

known as Janapadkalyani which was also the day center of a Brahmin priest of the Kingdom of Champa owing to Due to the political scenario he was given a very low position in the royal court.

Asoka's Name Meaning

Beyond the edicts, Asoka biographical information about him relies on legends written centuries later such as the 2 century. Asokanandana narrative of Asoka a part of Divyavandana and in the Srilankan text Mahavamsa (Great Chronicle). The emblem of the modern republic of India is an adaptation of the lion capital of Asoka. Asoka's name Asoka means "painless without sorrow" in Sanskrit. In his edict he was also called as Devnampriya or the beloved of God and Priyadarsin (Priyadarsni) or who regards everyone with affection). As he planted some specific trees on the roadside which are also known by his name Sarva Asoka tree or Asoka tree which is also referenced in the Asoka.

Asoka as an Excellent Warrior

Asoka was a great warrior. His command on the Mauryan army growing day by day. Asoka's elder brother thought that he as being favored by his father and was therefore jealous of him. Sushim tried to make him go against Asoka and succeeded in sending him from the capital city of Patliputra to Takshila province making the excuse that the Takshila people had revolted against the Province.

Sushim's Insecurity

When Asoka reached the province there the people and Military welcomed with the open arms and the revolt came to an end without any problem. Asoka's elder brother Sushima felt insecure because of his triumph. Bindusara was made against Asoka by his elder brother Sushim and therefore the Emperor sent Asoka away from the province.

Asoka's Love Life

Asoka met Karwaki and fell in love with her when he went to Kalinga and soon married her. There was a violent revolt in Vijaynagar. Asoka was called back from exile by Emperor Bindusara and he was sent to Ujjain. Asoka was treated by Buddhist monks and nuns when he was injured in the battle. It was in Ujjain that Asoka first came to know about life and teachings of Buddha.

Asoka's Skills

Bindusara appointed Asoka as the Governor of Avanti as he was very much influenced by his skills and talent. He married Devi who was the daughter of a tradesman from Vidisha, they had two children son Mahendra and Sanghmitra.

Asoka as Chand Asoka

When Bindusara was not well and was on his deathbed. Sushim was nominated his successor by the King but he was not to be favored due to his autocratic nature. Radhagupta and his group of ministers called upon Asoka and made him the King after Bindusara's death in 272 B.C. Then Asoka attacked the Patliputra and defeated and as well as killed all his brothers including Sushima. Only his younger brother Vithashoka was not killed. Buddhist literature describes Asoka was a brutal, cruel and very hot-tempered King. He was also called Chanda Asoka which meant Ashoka the terrible because of his disposition at that time. Asoka had built a torture chamber which was used for punishing offenders.

Kalinga War

Asoka conquered Kalinga in 265 B.C. and it was a turning point his life. Asoka achieved victory in this war. During this war, thousands were killed and many died. Asoka killed many people during Kalinga war. Kalinga was conquered by him. After the deadly war, he converted himself to Buddhist. Asoka when he went to see the consequences of the war he found that 1,00,000 deaths and 150000 deportations ending at around 200000 deaths. Asoka embraced Buddhism at around 263 B.C. He got Asoka pillars and edicts built and he sent Buddhist monk to Sri Lanka and Central Asia and for establishing monuments.

After Kalinga War

After the victory when Asoka went out to survey the state of things, we encountered nothing except burnt houses and scattered corpses. He saw the consequences of war and came to know about his brutality. He felt that war had caused lots of destruction. He was sad about the situation. He promised never to be violent again. Asoka made Buddhism the state religion around 260 B.C.

Literature of Buddhist Says that Asoka Was a Cruel and Brutal

King whose heart changed after the disastrous and deadly war also known as The Battle of Kalinga. After the bloodshed and when the war was over, he adopted Buddhism and thought to spread the religion. He became:

- a non-violent King
- messenger of love and peace,
- ruled his administration giving everyone equal rights and justice to all.

During his rule his kind nature as a ruler, he was titled as Devanampriya Priyadarsh. Asoka ruled very gracefully and India shined and glorified during his reign. He considered all philosophies as one, the Dharma Chakra adorning the Asoka stambh has been made a part of the Indian National Flag. The Lion Capital of Asoka has been used as an emblem of the Republic of India.

Asoka's as an Emperor

When Asoka became the emperor he attacked brutally and thus expanded his empire. This war lasted for eight years. Mauryan Empire that he inherited was quite sizable. He expanded his kingdom to a very great extent. Iran-Afghanistan borders in the west to Burma in the East can be seen under his control and came to known as his empire. He conquered the whole of South India except Ceylon (modern day Sri Lanka). Only Orissa could not be conquered or did not come under his empire or kingdom.

Asoka Followed

- Non-violence or ahimsa.
- Even the slaughter or mutilation of animals was abolished in his kingdom.
- Asoka believed in being vegetarian.
- He treated everyone equally without any discrimination.

- Equal rights for everyone –freedom and tolerance etc.
- Emperor Asoka held the third council of Buddhism.
- He also supported the Vijayawada sub-school of the St. Lvirauada sect. Now known as the Pali Theravada.
- Asoka sent missionaries to different islands as well as far of places and countries to spread the ideas of Buddhism.
- His son and daughter Mahindra and Sanghmitra were engaged to carry the message of Dharma
- Asoka thought preaching dharma to others is the best gift anyone can give.
- Asoka taught that conquest by the Dhamma is better than the conquering through violence.

The 14 Edicts Were Written so that People Might Act in Accordance with Them

He got these 14 edicts engraved in stone pillars and slabs and had them placed around his kingdom.

- No living being was to be slaughtered or sacrificed.
- Medical care for human as well as animals throughout his empire.
- Monks to tour the empire every five years teaching the principle of the dharma to the common people.

Based on 10 Principles Preached by Lord Buddha -Asoka Dictated the Practice of the Dharma

- Dhamma was the reason behind the philanthropic and tolerant administration.
- Dharma was not a new religion nor a brand new political philosophy.

It consisted of a code of conduct and principles for leading a peaceful and prosperous life.

14 edicts that he wanted to be followed throughout the province: Ashoka's edicts consist of:

- He didn't wanted any living being to be slaughtered or sacrificed.
- He believed that medical care should be taken of human as well as animals throughout his empire.
- He wanted that monks should take a tour of the empire every five years teaching the principle of the dharma to the common people.
- Respecting one's parents Priest and Monks is the biggest responsibility.
- Even the prisoners need to be treated humanely.
- He welcomed his subjects with the ideas and advises if they had any for the welfare of the state and administration.
- He welcomed all religions as they taught purity of heart and soul as well as humanity.
- He wanted that the Brahamans, needy and the monks should be helped as much as they can.
- Following the dharma and good attitude towards teachers was much better than marriage or other world celebration by the Emperor.

Buddhist Polity

In the history of India Asoka was the first emperor who established a Buddhist polity and implemented the Dasa Raja Dharma or the ten precepts which here outlined by Lord Buddha himself. They are enumerated as:

- One should try to be liberal and avoid selfishness.
- One should maintain a high moral character.
- One should be prepared to sacrifice one's own pleasure for the well being of the subjects.
- One should be honest and maintain absolute integrity.
- One should be kind and gentle.
- One should lead a simple life for the subjects to emulate.
- One should not hate anyone.
- One should be non-violent.
- One should try to be patient
- One should try to respect public opinion to promote peace and harmony.

Death

Asoka ruled almost all of the Indian Subcontinent from 268 to 232 B.C. Asoka died in 232 B.C. He belonged to Mauryan Dynasty and was one of the greatest Indian Emperor. Chandra Gupta Maurya who was the founder of Mauryan Dynasty was his grandfather. He was the creator of one of the largest empires in India. He left his empire to become a Jain monk. Asoka expanded Chandragupta's empire. His empire expanded and stretched from Afghanistan in the west to Bangladesh in the East. Asoka conquered mainly all the parts of South India except Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala. That time empire's capital was Patliputra in Magadh which is in present-day called Patna with provincial capital at Taxila and Ujjain.

Duties of Buddhist missionaries: His missionaries were sent to various parts of the world to spread his message:

Seleucid Emperor (Middle Asia), Eight Macedonia, Ceyrene (Libya) and Epirus (Greece and Albania). He also sent dignitaries all over his empire to propagate his ideals of Dhamma based on Buddhist philosophy. A spread of Buddhism was done in various places:

- Kashmir
- Mysore
- Mahadev
- Tamil Nadu
- Gujrat and Sindh
- Maharashtra

- Sri Lanka
- Nepal
- Thailand
- Myanmar

Asoka's Legacy:

- Thousands of Stupas and Viharas were built by Asoka for the Buddhist followers.
- Great Sanchi was one the greatest stupa built by him.
- Stupa has been declared to be a World Heritage site by UNESCO.
- The Ashoka pillar at Sarnath consists of four lion capital.

It was later adopted as the national emblem of the modern Indian Republic.

Death-

After the rule of 40 yrs, Asoka died in 232 B.C. After his death, his empire lasted for only 50 years.

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