

DO NOT DEPEND UPON GOD OR SUPERMAN

“On Saturday, the 4th March 1933 at 9.30 p.m. the meeting of Untouchables was held, on the ground of G. I. P. Railway Quarters (near Bombay Sandoharst Road). Punjaji Jadhao proposed the name of Shri R. D. Kawali, B. A., LL. B., for presidentship and was seconded by Shri Kardak. The meeting was arranged in order to present the address duly signed by 85 persons to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. For this purpose a vast pandal was erected which was fully occupied. Distinguished leaders like Shivatarkar, Naik, Sahastrabuddhe, Diwakar Pagare, Upshyam, Kamalakant Chitre, Meshram etc., attended the meeting.”¹

Diwakar Pagare presented the address in honour of Dr. Ambedkar.

While replying the address, Dr. Ambedkar said,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

“I thank you for the address you have presented to me.

This address is full of superlatives about my work and qualities. It means you are deifying a common man like you. These ideas of hero-worship will bring ruin on you if you do not nip them in the bud. By deifying an individual, you repose faith for your safety and salvation in one single individual with the result that you get into the habit of dependence and grow indifferent to your duty. If you fall a victim to these ideas, your fate will be no better than logs of wood in the national stream of life. Your struggle will come to naught.”

“Do not disregard,” he continued, “the political rights, the new epoch has bestowed upon you. Your whole class was trampled down up-till now because you were filled with ideas of helplessness. I may add that these ideas of hero-worship, deification and neglect of duty have ruined Hindu Society and are responsible for the degradation of our country.” “In other countries,” he observed. “during a national calamity and

¹: Janata, dated 11th March 1933.

crisis people take united action against the national calamity, ward off the danger, and attain peace and prosperity. But our religion has drummed into our ears that a man does nothing. He is a helpless log. At the appearance of a national calamity God is supposed to descend down and save us from danger! The result is that instead of taking a united action against their enemies they await the arrival of an incarnation to do this job for them.”*

“You must abolish your slavery yourselves. Do not depend for its abolition upon God or Superman. Your salvation lies in political powers and not in making pilgrimages and observance of fasts. Devotion to scriptures would not free you from your bondage, want and poverty. Your forefathers have been doing it for generations, but there has been no respite nor even a slight difference in your miserable life in any way. Like your forefathers, you wear rags. Like them, you subsist on thrown out crumbs ; like them, you perish in utter slums and hovels ; and like them, you fall easy victims to diseases with a death rate that rages among poultry. Your religious fasts, austerities and penances have not saved you from starvation.”

“It is the duty of the Legislature,” he concluded, “to provide for your food, clothes, shelter, education, medicine and all the means of earning a livelihood. The work of law-making and of its execution is to be performed with your consent, help and will. In short, law is the abode of all worldly happiness. You capture the power of law-making. It is, therefore, your duty to divert your attention from fast, worship and penance and apply it to capturing law-making power. That way lies your salvation. That way will end your starvation. Remember that it is not enough that a people are numerically in majority. They must be always watchful, strong, well-educated and self-respecting to attain and maintain success.”¹

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* Janata, dated 11th March 1933.

¹: Keer, Pp. 234-35.