

I HAVE A DREAM

MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. addressed the greatest demonstration of Negroes in the history of America at Lincoln Memorial, Washington D.C., on 28 August 1963. In the inspiring address, Martin Luther King focussed on the injustice done to the Negroes of America. In fact, a hundred years ago, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation bringing hope to millions of Negro slaves who were subjected to injustice.

However, a hundred years later the Negro still was not free. He was separated from the white society and treated with prejudice. He was made to live in poverty when the entire nation was enjoying material prosperity. He was pushed away and neglected. He was treated as an exile in his own homeland.

A hundred years ago the constitution was drafted and Independence was declared. It was like a promissory note that guaranteed the rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. But America defaulted. It gave the Negro people a bad cheque and it came back for want of funds. The Negro was denied justice and opportunity. The demonstration was organized to demand freedom and justice. This was urgent. Martin Luther King asked the Negroes not to rest until they achieved their just demands. The Negroes were subjected to great trials and tribulations. Some of them came fresh from prisons. They faced sufferings and brutality. Since suffering would finally set them free, he asked them to come out of despair.

After a hundred years of the drafting of the Constitution and declaration of Independence, the condition of the Negroes in America did not improve a bit. They were still subjected to segregation, injustice, captivity, citizenship rights, suffering and despair. However, Martin Luther King asks the Negroes not to cool off but continue their struggle.

He made it clear to the Negroes that they should come out of segregation and achieve racial justice. All the children of God must get equal opportunities. From racial injustice they must proceed to brotherhood. It would not be good for America to ignore the urgency of the Negro issue or underestimate it. Certainly the Negro discontent would soon yield place to freedom and equality. The struggle had just begun. There would be neither rest nor peace until the demands of the Negroes were fulfilled. The foundations of the nation would be shaken unless the demands were met.

However, Martin Luther King asked the Negroes not to indulge in wrongful deeds even for a right cause. The means must justify the ends. He also asked them not to display bitterness and hatred towards the Whites. He exhorted them to conduct themselves with dignity and discipline. Violence must be avoided. Physical force must be met with soul force. Not all Whites should be distrusted. Many Whites realized that their destiny and freedom were tied up with those of the Negroes. The Negroes must know that they would not be able to walk alone.

Martin Luther King asked the Negroes always to march ahead and never turn back. They should not be satisfied until they could enter motels and hotels, and move from smaller homes to larger homes like others. They would not be satisfied unless they were allowed to vote for a better future and get justice and righteous treatment.

During the historic demonstration of the unprivileged Negroes of America, Martin Luther King announced that he had a dream within the larger American dream. The dream was for a better destiny for the Negroes of America.

He entertained the hope that one day America would rise up to the truth that all men were created equal. He dreamed that one day slaves and slaves-owners would eat together like brothers. His dream was that the state of Mississippi would become an oasis of freedom and justice. Further Martin Luther King held the dream that one day his four children would be judged not by the colour of their skin, but by their character.

Another dream of Martin Luther King was that in the state of Alabama black boys and black girls would join hands with their white counterparts and walk together as sisters and brothers.

Martin Luther King had unqualified faith in God. He was sure that one day lowly placed things would be elevated and highly placed things would be humbled. Rough places would become plain and crooked places would be made straight. God would thus reveal his glory. He hoped that one day the differences would vanish and there would be brotherhood in America.

With faith in God, Martin Luther King declared that the Negroes would be able to work, pray, struggle, suffer in jail, and demand freedom, together. They knew that they would be free one day. On that day all the children of God would sing of freedom in ringing tones. There would be no difference then between black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics. This meant that all men were free at last.

Finally, Martin Luther King gave a clarion call to the Negroes to come out of their despair and continue to work with the faith that selfless suffering would result in redemption.

This was the fond dream of Martin Luther King

BUBBLING WELL ROAD BY RUDYARD KIPLING

The Chenab falls into the Indus about fifteen miles above the hamlet of Chachuran. Five miles to the west of this hamlet lies the Bubbling Well Road and the house of the priest of Arti-goth. Five miles to the west of Chachuran, there is a patch of ten to twenty feet high jungle grass in a plot of three to four square miles. In the middle of this plot hides the priest.

The priest is a one-eyed man with the impress of two copper coins burnt between his brows. Some people say that in the days of Runjit Singh, this old man must have been tortured for his mischiefs. Only the British Government can control him now.

A pig with a foot-long tooth enters the grass patch. The narrator goes into the patch to shoot it for the sake of honour. He carries a gun. He is accompanied by his dog, Mr. Wardle. The dog slips in and out of the grass clumps, but the narrator finds it hard to go through the thick grass. He feels that he is in the midst of Central Asia. He is unable to see two yards through the grass. The grass stems are as hot as boiler tubes.

The narrator wishes to leave the pig alone. He comes to a six-inch narrow path that runs through thick grass. After fifty yards, he finds the dog missing. He wonders where it has gone. Whatever words he speaks are repeated. When he is silent, he hears an offensive laughter. The heat and the laughter upset him. There seems to be no ground in front of him. He drives his gun around but it does not touch the ground. The grunting sound he makes is repeated. When he is silent, there is the sound of laughter.

The narrator moves forward inch by inch and finds a black gap in the ground just before him. It is a very deep well. Very black things are circling round and round in the black water. A little spring of water on one side of the well is creating the sound of laughter. Something in the well turns over on its back and moves round and round with one hand and half an arm held high. The narrator creeps round the well and after walking through the grass for some time, comes to a good path. This path takes him to the priest's hut. The priest is afraid of the white coloured narrator. Being tired, he goes to sleep on a bedstead outside the priest's hut. After walking up, he asks the priest to lead him out of the grass into an open ground. When they reach an open ground, the priest runs back into the thick grass. The villagers throw stones at him if they see him. The narrator walks to the village of Arti-goth for a drink.

The narrator learns from the villagers of Arti-goth that the patch of grass is full of devils and ghosts. They are all in the service of the priest. Men, women and children who enter the grass never return. The priest uses their livers for his witchcraft. Before leaving, the narrator tries to burn the grass, but it is too green. He decides to come back in summer with a bundle of newspapers and a match box and put an end to the mystery of the Bubbling well Road.