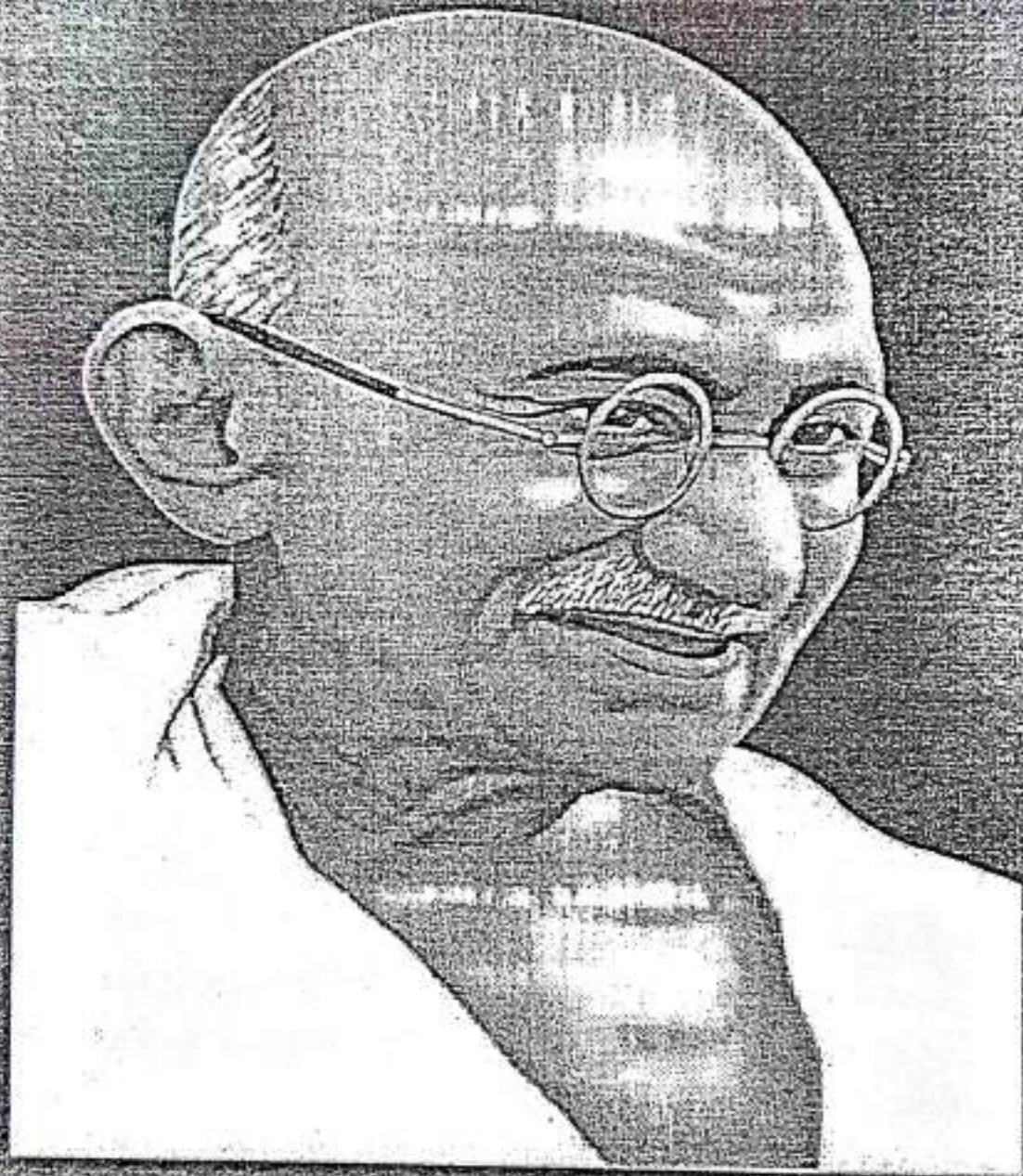


# महात्मा गांधी

एक बहुआयामी व्यक्तिमत्व



प्राचार्य डॉ. जे. वी. अंजने  
प्रा. विनोद एन. रामटेके  
डॉ. संदीप एस. साळुंके

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संपादक

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- या ई-संघात प्रकाशित झालेल्या लेखातील मते हि ज्या त्या लेखकांची आहेत. त्यांच्याशी प्रकाशक, संपादक सहमत असतीलच असं नाही.
- या कोणत्याही भागाचे पुननिर्माण अथवा वापर, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक अथवा यांत्रिकी साधनांनी- फोटोकॉपिंग, रेकॉर्डिंग किंवा कोणत्याही प्रकारे माहिती साठवणुकीच्या तंत्रज्ञानातून प्रकाशकांच्या लेखी परवानगीशिवाय करता येणार नाही. सर्व हक्क राखून ठेवले आहेत.

## FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF GANDHIJI AND ITS RELEVANCE IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN SOCIETY

Author:- Prof Swati Sagar Kathaley

### Abstract:

Seventy-three long years after getting independence, India still struggles with the herculean tasks of eradicating poverty, illiteracy, cleanliness and hygiene, basic education, medical facilities and rural empowerment. India keeps on debating the problems through different medias, but a lasting solution to its societal intricacies remains a distant dream. Mahatma Gandhi, who played a very crucial role in the Indian independence movement by organizing a mass social revolution, was a great statesman, thinker and author. Every year, on the occasion of his birth and death anniversary, most Indians follow it as another ritual. His fundamental concepts and views on rural empowerment, swadeshi, cottage industries, basic education, non-violence and many more will help India to achieve its lost glory.

The present paper will try to probe the concept of the 'Seven Deadly Sins' advocated by Gandhiji and its relevance in contemporary Indian society.

**Key words:** Concept of seven deadly sins, and its relevance in contemporary Indian society.

According to Gandhiji, the seven deadly sins, which human beings should avoid doing are:

*Wealth without work*

*Pleasure without conscience*

*Knowledge without Character*

*Commerce without morality*

*Science without humanity*

*Politics without principle*

*Worship without sacrifice*

When we observe the contemporary Indian society and its humongous problems, we come to realize the relevance of Gandhiji's preaching of the seven deadly sins to be avoided by all. Let us focus on each.

## **Wealth without Work**

India is struggling with the cancerous spread of corruption at all levels in its social, political and bureaucratic life. The extreme greed of Indians to amass more and more wealth for themselves, without rightly acquiring it through their work or labour, is the root cause of many evils. According to Wikipedia, in July 2021, India's Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) replied to an RTI query stating undeclared assets worth rupees 20, 078 crores. It's a huge mockery, that India ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the world in terms of its economy, but is ranked 86<sup>th</sup> out of a total 180 countries by the Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International. This means that half the countries in this world are less corrupt than India. Corruption has very serious consequences on the overall economic and social development in India. It creates imbalances in the effective utilization of resources, compromises quality, creates social inequities and hampers the development of the nation. The unlawful practice of evasion of taxes, use of government resources for personal use, use of clout to get personal benefits, black-marketing and many more such practices lead to a huge monetary loss to the government. The direct result of all these is non availability of financial resources for development work, inequitable distribution of money, division and rift in social hierarchy etc. As Mahatma Gandhi quotes, "There is enough in this world for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed". This unbridled race for acquiring unjust wealth has pushed India to be a poor developing nation, with lot of social imbalances. Gandhiji always advocated truth, honesty and transparency in personal and public life. The central government under Hon'ble shri Narendra Modi tried to stem the corruption by various means. It can very well be assessed that the face of social and economic India will change, if corruption is minimized or irradiated. Gandhiji's moral stance on acquiring wealth justly, if followed by Indians in practice, would really usher India as a global leader in all spheres.

## **Pleasure without conscience**

Gandhiji's message seems very apt in today's world of hedonistic sensual pleasures. With the advent of internet and other social media, there is a tremendous boom in getting pleasure through immoral means. The young India today is addicted to watch porn videos, blue films, nudism, vulgar language usage in films and songs, free sex, gay and lesbian relations, dating sites etc. The end result of all these is that our youth are going astray from the proper path and there is an increase in crimes, especially against women. When we read or hear the gruesome news of rape and other heinous crimes in our dailies, we wonder whether we belong

to a decent and cultured society. There is a tremendous increase in cybercrimes, resulting in financial embezzlement, trap, exploitation and so on. Our Indian films too have lost their sobriety of earlier days, where the theme and songs of the movies were meaningful. Nowadays, the pleasure is derived from vulgar style of clothes, double meaning language, hideous postures etc. The direct result of all these is a tremendous increase in crime against women. If we as a society are not able to control this, then the day is not far, when the youth will be depraved and fall so low in values, that there will be an atmosphere of fear and insecurity. So Gandhiji's message of acquiring pleasure with your complete conscience, is a very apt message today. All the controlling authorities under the government like the cybercrime department, police, web portal controllers, social media vigilance department, lawyers, social activists, women's group, censor board and many more should play a very active and strict role in maintaining a healthy social atmosphere. Secondly, when the youth are addicted to any kind of pleasure, be it drinking, smoking, taking drugs, eating ghutka and pan masala, they lose interest in honest hard work, leading to unemployment, financial burden on family loss of health, zest and energy etc. The time is ripe today to teach our youth, the true meaning of pleasure and to derive it consciously from proper means.

### **Knowledge without character**

As compared to the past few centuries, there is tremendous explosion of knowledge from all quarters. Apart from the print media, today there is technology supported knowledge dissemination through the internet web portal. At the click of a button, anything can be accessed for free. But as compared to this, the character and values of human beings are rapidly declining. The fall in ethical values in spite of knowledge and education has led to a lot of social problems. Crime, violence, greed, ego, manipulations, deceit and a very cold and selfish attitude towards others, is the direct outcome of this. As Gandhiji rightly points out, humanity can only survive if there is love, peace, compassion and brotherhood amongst people. As compared to the past, we have technology to support our endeavors to support humanitarian causes, but the rapid decline in values is making the world a very inhuman place to live. According to Gandhiji, knowledge and expertise acquired by education must be purposefully utilized for the well-being of scores of underprivileged and deprived sections of a society. In his thoughts on education in India, called 'Nai Taleem', Gandhiji focuses on inculcating values in students, instead of just focusing on bookish knowledge. The crisis of Indian society today is the crisis of moral values, which has led to a plethora of problems. Knowledge provides us

with livelihood, but the fabric of the society is made strong by people of good and impeccable character. Knowing about rockets, planets, gadgets etc. is good, but not deceiving others, helping someone in need and spreading kindness and love is better, rather best of all.

India, a land of great saints, philosophers, educationists and social workers, should fall so low in moral and ethical values, is a great blot on us today. All our knowledge resources from the past, our religious and philosophical books teach us to be humans with a very good character imbuing values of truth, love, peace and compassion. As per Gandhiji's views, there is an urgent need to reorient our education systems, to inculcate a strong moral character in its students and citizens.

### **Commerce without morality**

Commerce or business is the lifeline of a nation. It involves a range of operations from production to selling. Ethical or moral business means conducting a business with honesty, without being unjust to any other party. If any business is conducted on fair terms and in a rightful manner, then there is no exploitation or injustice on others. This helps in fostering a fair competition in the society. Today, we observe that most of the commercial and business activities are conducted for profit only. 'Profit by hook or crook' seems to be the mantra today. There are scores of examples every day of paying bribes to clinch business. The infamous Bofors case, 2G spectrum case, stashing of money in Swiss banks etc. involving reputed politicians are still fresh in people's mind. Lot of manipulations take place in the allotting of tenders amounting to crores of rupees. Compromising with the quality of business, harms the society immensely. Cheating, profit-mongering, monopolizing, selling sub-standard goods, trafficking, poaching, confiscating land and other means for one's commercial benefits, causes irreparable damage to others. Gandhiji advocated the policy of doing business with ethical means for the well-being of all.

### **Science without humanity**

As Gandhiji aptly puts, 'Science without humanity' is destructive for all. The recent COVID pandemic caused by the SARS-COVI-2 virus was supposedly leaked from a research lab in the Wuhan province of China, which caused unprecedented deaths and disruption of economy in almost all the nations of the world. What was the purpose of the scientific research on the virus? Was it used like a kind of weapon on the western nations by China? Many such questions lie unanswered today. The point Gandhiji wants to make is that, the discoveries of

science have to be used purposefully, rationally with a humanistic approach. He firmly believed that if mankind failed to do this, then there would be catastrophic destruction all around. The production and use of nuclear weapons, missiles and other lethal artillery has made the world a very unsafe place to live. The very deadly impact of atom bombs on the twin Japanese industrial cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is known to all. The world has to find out other alternatives to war and hostilities. The unprecedented use of machines and gadgets, has not only made us inactive and unhealthy, but they are posing a great threat to our environment. Widespread use of vehicles all over the world, coupled with industrialization, has damaged our environment beyond repair. The global warming witnessed by us and fluctuations in climate are very scary threats knocking on our doors. Gandhiji advocated in all his books the principle of 'Simple living, High thinking'. Simple living, which is close to nature and in tandem with it, would resolve many of our complex problems created due to our own misdoings. Less use of gadgets and machines in our day-to-day life, would benefit us greatly. The purpose of science should be to help us, rather than causing problems for us. In India, we are witnessing the syndrome of addiction to mobiles and computers, leading to a very dull and inefficient younger generation. Academicians, politicians, doctors, counsellors etc. should come forward and play an active role in all these.

### **Politics without principles**

Once upon a time, Politics was a means to serve the underprivileged and the needy. Today, it has become the foremost means to earn easy money, show clout and power. Politicians are using their influence to earn easy money. Every day we hear of some scam being exposed or hoarding of money. For their petty gains, the politicians have adopted the divide and rule policy. Nobody in India believes that a politician can be honest and scrupulous. In India, it is a family tradition, passing on from one generation to another. The politicians don't consider themselves answerable to the people of their constituency or with affairs related to their ministry. Gandhiji very aptly points out the malaises in the present system and advises to follow politics with principles. The reforms in our political systems, politicians and the way governance is conducted, will bring radical changes in the lives of common people. Transparency in public life as advocated by Gandhiji is the need of the day. Unless and until our political leaders, statesmen and bureaucrats consider themselves accountable to the people and their problems, nothing much will change. Many positive changes are coming over the years in this area and Gandhiji's dream of politics with principles will be a reality.

## Worship without sacrifice

India is a country of many great religions. The teachings of most of the religions preach the values of truth, compassion, love, secularism and tolerance. The big question is 'Are we true followers of our religion?' The answer is a loud 'No'. The true reason, as pointed out by Gandhiji is that most of us follow religion as a ritual, without a sense of sacrifice. Sacrifice here means one's willingness to relinquish one's comfort, riches and happiness for the welfare of others. Gandhiji preached that if one worships God, one should be ready for sacrifices. If people remain selfish, egoistic and irrational, then there is misery and chaos around.

## Conclusion

The seven deadly sins as described by Gandhiji, should be avoided by people of our country at any cost. If we see the widespread poverty, illiteracy, superstition, violence, casteism, lack of hygiene and cleanliness, Gandhiji's advice in each area is invaluable. Each of the sins described by Gandhiji, constitutes one of the core problems in India. Gandhiji advocates truth, honesty, simplicity, frugality, compassion for the needy, unselfishness, secular outlook etc. Gandhiji has written widely on basic education, rural development, swadeshi and cottage industries, hygiene and sanitization, trusteeship of wealth and many more. Many of the ideas of Gandhiji are being implemented by the current central government. It started with the 'Swachha Bharat Abhiyan' to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Gandhiji. Building of toilets to stop open defecation was the primary aim of this project. It was fairly successful. Similarly, the Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna, Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana, Rural Self Employment Training Institutes and many more are inspired by Gandhiji's model of rural development and empowerment.

The day will surely come in near future, when with a strong, ethical and dynamic leadership backed by Gandhiji's vision and People's support, Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a strong, self-reliant and ethical India will come true.