

# Rev. Dada J. P. Vaswani

Renowned Spiritual Leader



*A*mongst the millions of planetary systems in the galaxies of our infinite Universe, our planet is the only one that is known to be inhabited; and the most ancient civilization on this planet had its origins in Sindh. The inhabitants were peace-loving and highly evolved-rich in wealth and culture. But it was because of this wealth and peace-loving nature its inhabitants that Sindh became a target of repeated onslaughts by invaders, who plundered Sindh, time and again, bringing untold misery and suffering to its natives.

*But God, in His wisdom has always been forthcoming in providing relief and alleviating the sufferings of the inhabitants of Sindh, thus enabling them to tread on the path of humanity. Sindh has given birth to many saints and sages.*

*The Hindu belief maintains that God-the Almighty and formless, attains human form and comes in our midst as an 'avtaar' to guide his children towards the right and spiritual path. The current generation is blessed with the presence of Dada Jashan Vaswani-who through his spiritual presence and knowledge has given succour to millions who have strayed and guided them towards the path of salvation. We are indeed honoured to have him amidst us today.*

*Jawhrani:* At the outset, Dada, can you elaborate when and how was “Sadhu Vaswani Mission” started?

*Dada:* In 1929, God’s will brought Sadhu Vaswani to Hyderabad (Sindh) after his elder brother Shri P.L. Vaswani passed away in Karachi. Sadhu Vaswani decided to stay in Hyderabad, his birthplace. This turned out to be a momentous decision not just for the saint, but for hundreds of eager disciples who would now come to him in ever increasing numbers.

The Brahmo Samaj, the Guru Sangat and the Theosophical Society of Hyderabad invited him to deliver lectures and conduct classes, Gita class, Isa class, Sunday class, in their halls. To these classes flocked several aspiring seekers, many of whom would become lifelong followers and devout disciples of Sadhu Vaswani. Two of them were Mrs. Parpati Malkani and Kumari Shanti Makhijani. Shanti’s father, at her behest, offered a hall where Sadhu Vaswani could hold his satsang (fellowship meetings). And so began Sakhi Satsang, the seed from which sprouted the Mission.

Sadhu Vaswani believed that service and sacrifice were the most vital aspects of spiritual life. Not for his followers, the life of isolation far removed from the world and its people. It was not long before the Sakhi Satsang swung into various dynamic activities that galvanized the devout Sindhis of Hyderabad into a new life of dedicated service to society.

After the partition, God’s will brought Sadhu Vaswani and his band of dedicated workers and ardent admirers to India. They chose Punyabhoomi Pune, known as Poona at that time, as their base.

When Sadhu Vaswani dropped his physical body on January 16, 1966, the Mission was renamed as the Sadhu Vaswani Mission.

The Sadhu Vaswani Medical Complex in Pune is a state of the art medical facility that provides first class care to the most discerning patients and offers concessionary and free treatment to poor patients. It is a place from where no patient is turned away for lack of funds; where the sick and suffering are treated with love and respect. This is one of those few unique hospitals where human life is respected, not from birth but from the moment of conception.

In 1933, Sadhu Vaswani founded the “Mira Movement” in Education which centered on character-building, spiritual

awakening and service. Today, the Sadhu Vaswani Mission runs schools and colleges for girls in Pune where over 6,000 students receive an education that stretches from the pre-primary to post-graduate level. Along with academic excellence, the education is structured to nurture the nascent spirituality in every child and encourages each to participate in humanitarian activities such as feeding the poor, and visiting orphanages and homes for the aged. The education is global in perspective, but Indian in approach.

The students receive a, "triple training of the head, the hand and the heart."

The Mission has undertaken village upliftment programmes in the backward areas of Kutch and Saurashtra, improving the quality of life of villagers living below the poverty line.

The Jiv Daya programme of the Mission undertakes the daily feeding of birds and stray animals.

Every year, November 25, Sadhu Vaswani's birthday, is observed as Meatless Day and Animal Rights Day. Millions of people send their pledges to the Mission, promising to abstain from food of violence on the day.

The "bhandara" feeds two meals to hundreds of poor people and destitutes everyday. Apart from this, tea, snacks and food are also served to the homeless poor and to institutions for the underprivileged.

In a programme of rehabilitation and upliftment, instituted to help indigent women stand on their own feet, free vocational courses are conducted for them and help is rendered in the form of equipment, like free sewing machines.

Electricity and gas connections, household utensils and rations are provided to needy families regularly.

Toilet blocks have been built and leaking roofs repaired in the houses of the underprivileged.

Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation following natural disasters.

Emergency hospitals in disaster struck areas.

Digging of wells.

Township rebuilding projects such as 92 new homes built for the 1993 Latur earthquake victims, 450 new homes built for the 2001 Gujarat earthquake victims and 94 homes built for the 2004

tsunami victims.

*Jawhrani:* How and when did you come into this "Spiritual World"?

*Dada:* I cannot say that I have come to the "Spiritual World". I am still trying to do so and feel sure that, one day my Beloved Master, Gurudev Sadhu Vaswani, will grant me entry into the Spiritual World.

When I was a college student, it was my good fortune to come in close contact with the Great Spiritual Master. Since then, I have been trying my best to live my life in accordance with the noble teachings of the Master. His emphasis is on: "Be humble: Be non-egoistic!" He taught that when the ego goes, God glows. I feel grateful to him for revealing to me a new realm in which beauty smiles and wisdom is radiant.

*Jawhrani:* Are the charitable activities of the Mission restricted only to Sindhis or open to all?

*Dada:* The Sadhu Vaswani Mission is a non-sectarian institution which believes in the unity of all religions and reveres the Great Ones of all faiths. Days sacred among others, to Krishna and Christ, Buddha and Muhammed, Moses and Guru Nanak, Kabir and St. Francis, Zoroaster and Baha'ullah are observed by the Mission with special prayer meetings and service programmes. Indeed the Mission serves all sections of society with no attention to caste, creed or community. Its service activities today embrace several spheres that influence people's lives-social, educational, medical, environmental and spiritual.

*Jawhrani:* Your mission began organizing "Sindhi Sammelan" since last year, what is the main objective of the same?

*Dada:* The first "Sindhi Sammelan" was held last year and this year from February 20 to 22, 2009, we shall be having the 2nd Sindhi Sammelan. The idea is to make the Sindhis aware of the rich heritage which is theirs as children of one of the most ancient civilizations in the world as the Indus Valley Civilization. Many of the Sindhi parents are busy making money to be able to make both ends meet. They do not have time or energy to make their children aware of their rich traditions.

The Sindhis are a scattered community. The Sammelan provides a common platform for them where they can meet each other, come

closer to each other and discuss their problems with a view to find correct solutions.

*Jawhrani:* How hopeful are you about the future of Sindhi Language?

*Dada:* It was the great German poet, regarded by many as the world's greatest poet of the 19th century, Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, who said: "In all things it is better to hope than to despair."

The sweet, lyrical Sindhi language will live on and contribute to the life and thought of humanity.

In his mercy, God has taken me to many states in India and to many countries outside India. Wherever I go, I make it a point to meet my Sindhi brothers and sisters. And I tell them: we are a small minority, we have no land which we can call our own. If there is one thing that will help us to maintain our identity it is our sweet, Sindhi language. For almost 20 centuries, the Jews wandered homeless, scattered in many parts of the world. They kept their language alive and strong. After over 19 centuries, they got back their homeland, and they could recognise each other by the language they spoke.

If possible, the Sindhis should be able to read and write Sindhi. If they cannot do so at least they should converse with each other and in their homes in Sindhi.

I recall the moving words of Gurudev Sadhu Vaswani. He said: "To be cut off from your language and literature, O Sindhi people, will be to be uprooted from life itself!"

*Jawhrani:* Do the institutes managed by you provide education in Sindhi medium or teach Sindhi as a subject?

*Dada:* We had regular schools in which students were being prepared for board examinations through the Sindhi medium. Gradually, the number of students declined. We even gave them free lunches, free uniforms, free transport, to and from their homes. In spite of this, the numbers kept on declining until we were compelled to close down the schools.

In the schools that are running today, it is obligatory for every Sindhi student to learn Sindhi; so also in the Junior College. In the Degree College, Sindhi is offered as one of the languages.

*Jawhrani:* There is this impression, specially amongst women, that if their children study in Sindhi medium schools, they will not be

successful in life. What would be your advice to them?

*Dada:* My advice to everyone is that if for some reason they are unable to study in a Sindhi medium school, they should atleast include Sindhi as one of the subjects they are taught.

*Jawhrani:* There are many inter-caste marriages amongst Sindhis. Where will this lead us?

*Dada:* Considering the conditions in which we live, our young people are sure to come in contact with young people belonging to different castes and communities. We cannot avoid inter-caste marriages. But my advice to every young person is, "you have received the human birth through the kindness of your parents. Therefore, in whatever you do, get the consent of your parents."

*Jawhrani:* What would be your advice to the common man of today who is oblivious to spiritualism? How can he find the right path?

*Dada:* My advice to such a man would be: "Live not for self alone, but live for others also. Share a part of what has been given you with those who are less fortunate and whose need is greater than yours."

*Jawhrani:* History has been a witness to repeated invasions of Sindh, affecting the common man's life, belief and faith. Is that the reason that Sindh was always flooded, by nature, with numerous pious souls to provide rightful guidance?

*Dada:* It is true God was especially kind to the Sindhis. He sent to Sindh, from time to time, holy men and women, saints and sages whose one and only mission was to lead the people out of the darkness of maya into the light of the spirit.

*Jawhrani:* It has been said and accepted by all that God is formless and beyond all 'captures'. In that case how can one see Him or have His Darshan?

*Dada:* God can be seen. He can be touched and felt and heard and spoken to. He is more real than the physical forms and objects we see with our eyes open. But for this, effort is needed. We need to open the Third Eye. For this we need to live a life of sadhana (Spiritual discipline). It was Jesus who said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." At the present moment, our hearts are not pure. They are stained, soiled, smudged, tainted with many taints which we have accumulated through many births. They need to be cleansed. Hence, the need for sadhana in our life.

Gurudev Sadhu Vaswani indicated to us a shortcut to God. He said: "If you wish to see God, you must cleanse your hearts. Therefore, awaken within you, deep longing, yearning for God." This deep longing will bring tears to our eyes and the tears will do the work of cleansing.

When a holy man was asked: "Have you seen God?" He answered: "I can see Him even now more clearly than I see you!"

*Jawhrani:* With the travel of time, centuries have passed and with the turning of ages, several things have changed including man's faith in God. How to reinstate that faith?

*Dada:* We live in an age of science, an age of reason. So many things in which man believed blindly are regarded as superstitions. In the coming age, I believe, science and spirituality will be wedded together and a new renaissance of faith will arise.

True faith is, believing that which we cannot see. In the new age, man will realise that there are many things which our eyes cannot see. Our eyes have limited vision limited to the spectrum we call VIBGYOR. There are vast regions of ultra violet and infra-red which we cannot see.

Man is a 3-dimensional creature. But the universe is n-dimensional. When science proves this and many other things, real faith, true faith, solid faith will be born and man will learn to walk in the light of faith.

*Jawhrani:* Please give us the Gyan as to what is God? How to believe in His existence?

*Dada:* God cannot be defined.

Gurudev Sadhu Vaswani used to say: "God defined is God denied. You ask what is God? I wish to ask you: "What is not God?" God is everything visible and invisible, tangible and intangible, with form and without form and above form and formlessness.

Belief in the existence of God is a gift we receive from God and His saints. Pray to have this belief. Without this belief, life is no better than a wilderness.

*Jawhrani:* To what extent is there truth in the theory of reincarnation?

*Dada:* It is commonly said, "he that is born must die. The theory of reincarnation says he that dies must be reborn. For life is endless, undying." The Law of Karma states: "As you sow, so shall you

reap!" We sow many seeds during a single incarnation. We have to be reborn a number of times to reap what we have sown.

All around us there is inequality. There are people so wealthy that special houses are built for their dogs to live in. On the other hand, there are people so poor that they do not have a roof under which to hide their heads even in the cold of wintry nights. This inequality can be explained only when we accept the theory of reincarnation. Everyone gets (reaps) what he has sown.

There is the famous case of Shanti Devi, a girl who was born in Delhi, in 1926. When she was three years old, she began to recall details of a former life she lived at Mathura, about eighty miles away from Delhi. She said that she had been born there in 1902, was a Choban by caste and had been married to a cloth merchant, named Kedar Nath Chaubey. She gave birth to a son and as a result, died ten days later.

When Shanti Devi was nine years old her parents wrote to Mathura to find out if there was a cloth merchant there named Kedar Nath Chaubey. This person answered the letter and confirmed Shanti Devi's statements. He then sent a relative to her home and afterwards came himself. She immediately identified both those persons.

The following year (1936) Shanti Devi was taken to Mathura and a committee was appointed to note her reactions. As soon as she got down from the train at Mathura railway station she recognised a relative of Kedar Nath Chaubey, even though he was in the midst of a large crowd. She was then put in a carriage and the driver was asked to follow her directions. She seemed familiar with the town though this was the first time that she visited it in her new birth and guided the driver to the house of Kedar Nath Chaubey. The house had been repainted a new colour, but she easily recognised it. Near the house was an old man and she identified him as Kedar Nath's father (i.e. her previous father-in-law).

Upon entering the house, she was asked a number of questions with regards to the arrangement of the rooms, closets, etc. She answered the questions correctly. She went to the house of her previous parents and identified them out of a crowd of over fifty persons.

Shanti Devi said that she had hidden some money in another

house, the one which was the house of Kedar Nath's family. In this house, she pointed to a corner of one of the rooms as the place where she had buried the money. The place was dug but was found empty. Shanti Devi insisted that she had left money there, and eventually Kedar Nath acknowledged that he had found and removed the money after his wife's death.

There are many cases of this type. Some of them have been examined by scientists. Several years ago, a book was published in America. If I remember right, the title of the book was, "Twelve Cases of Reincarnation", scientifically examined. The book is written by a team of scientists.

Recently, I read a book concerning the work of Dr. Stevenson, who is working as a Professor of Psychology in the University of Virginia, in America. He has investigated over 1,600 cases in Britain, Europe, America and the Far East in all of which, children claim to remember specific details of their earlier lives. With the help of a network of informants, in many countries, he has discovered that the cases are, on an average, 90 percent correct with regard to historical facts. He has found that such children, between the ages of two to four, start to tell their parents that they remember having lived another life before birth. Listen to the words of Dr. Stevenson:

"A child claiming to remember a previous life usually asks to be taken to the place where he says he lived during that life, and for this reason or to satisfy their own curiosity, his parents nearly always try to find the family to which he seems to be referring".

"If the child has furnished enough details, specially by identifying family names, the search is nearly always successful... the child is then usually found to have been accurate in about 90 per cent of the statements he has been making..."

"In the usual case of this type, the child's utterances concerning his previous life reach a peak of volume and detail between the ages of three and five. After this, the memories of the previous life appear to fade in most cases."

*Jawhrani:* A common man in everyday life is confronted with multiple problems so much so that he is tired of facing these and gives up even the desire of the destination. Any advice for such persons?

*Dada:* Life is full of incidents, both pleasant and unpleasant. When an

unpleasant thing happens, we are apt to lose our balance; this creates a negative emotion which expresses itself in a feeling of sadness or depression. An effective way of dealing with such a situation is to go to the root of the matter and, "let go" what is causing the negative emotion. Let it go! Let everything go!

Has my sister failed to understand me? Let it go! Has my brother spoken ill of me? Let it go! Has my best friend turned against me? Let it go! Have I suffered loss in business? Let it go! Have my plans been upset? Let it go! Have I been treated with disrespect? Let it go! Has a dear one passed away? Let it go! Has my health suffered a setback? Let it go! Have I been cheated, robbed, deceived by someone in whom I placed my trust? Let it go! In this world of transitoriness, a world in which things come and go and nothing abides, is there anything worth worrying over? Let it go! The more we let go, the more do we conserve our energies for the constructive and creative tasks of life.

What are problems? They are steps on the ladder of evolution. In the measure in which we face problems in the right manner, in that measure our consciousness is elevated. Problems do not come to us by accident. Problems are deliberately thrown in our way by a beneficent Providence for our own good. The word problem is derived from two Latin words "pro" and "balo" which mean that which is thrown in our way. What would life be without problems?

Problems are like a knife. If you hold them by the blade, they will cut your fingers. If you hold them by the handle, you can do so many things with their help.

*Jawhrani:* Is it true that only unsuccessful people and failures feel comfort in 'satsang'?

*Dada:* The word satsang means, sat sang, fellowship with truth. Truth transcends success and failure. It elevates you to transcendental heights. Satsang has rightly been called the door to the Kingdom of Heaven. If you enter this Kingdom you go beyond dandas, pairs of opposites, such as success and failure, profit and loss, praise and censure, health and sickness, light and darkness, heat and cold.

*Jawhrani:* Everyone who is brought before a court need not be a criminal, so also everyone going to a war-front need not be a warrior. But is it true that everyone who goes to a mandir (any place of

worship) is a worshipper?

*Dada:* The doors of a true mandir (place of worship) are open to all irrespective of colour, caste, country or creed.

There was a friend who was afraid of approaching a mandir. He would not even enter the street on which a mandir was situated. Then, he fell in love with a girl who was fond of going to a mandir. When in the company of the girl he visited the mandir for the first time, he was so deeply impressed by the peaceful atmosphere that existed in the mandir that he spent some hours everyday in the precincts of the mandir. A day came when he loved the mandir more than the girl and he decided to live a monastic life.

A person who visits a mandir need not necessarily be a worshipper. But the atmosphere of a true place of worship is such that it can, if it be God's Will, convert an atheist into a devotee.

*Jawhrani:* We Sindhis bow our heads at every place of worship Temple, Mosque, Church or Gurudwara. Are we afraid of annoying anyone? Are we timid?

*Dada:* Every time that I pass by a Temple or Mosque, Church or Gurudwara, I remember to bow my head not because I am afraid or timid but because it is a sacred place and reminds me of the living presence of God.

*Jawhrani:* Where the head is bowed, we call it a "Mandir". But what would you call that place where we bow our hearts and minds?

*Dada:* I would love to call that place: 'Dil Ka Dwar Khol'.

*Jawhrani:* What is 'religion'?

*Dada:* Religion is built up of two Latin words 're' and 'ligo' which means "I bind". Religion is that which binds us to the Source. For some reason or the other we have been separated from the Source and our life has become directionless. We have wandered long; we have wandered far and wide. 'Tis time we returned to our Source. And religion is the way that takes us back to the Source.

True religion is peace, is harmony, is love, is service. Crusades and jihads are a crime against religion. True religion points to a life of brotherhood and friendship, unity and peace.

*Jawhrani:* How can we implement religion in our daily life?

*Dada:* To be able to implement religion in daily life, let us, among other

things, do the following:

1. Never miss our daily appointment with God.
2. Accept every experience, pleasant or unpleasant, as prasadam out of the Holy Hands of God.
3. Be aware of everything that you do; never do anything mechanically.
4. Experience everything but expect nothing.
5. Grow in the spirit of reverence for all life. Regard all life as sacred.
6. Always adopt a positive attitude.
7. Help as many as you can to lift the load on the rough road of life.

*Jawhrani:* 'Gita' mentions something to the effect that everyone is subservient to his own nature, in other words slave of his own nature. How far is it true?

*Dada:* The Bhagavad Gita points to the truth that man, as he is made, is controlled by gunas. But, the essential message of the Gita is that man is a master of himself. For man is essentially the atman. And the atman transcends the gunas. Therefore, the Gita speaks of tri-gunatita the man who transcends the three gunas.

Sri Krishna's word to his dear, devoted, disciple Arjuna is: "Utthishta! Paramtapa." "Stand up, o scorcher of foes!"

The Gita is a scripture not of failure or defeat but of triumph and victory. The man of the Gita stands up as a hero on the battlefield of life.

*Jawhrani:* For doing any good or auspicious work, people are very particular and choosy about the place and time and also consult experts for finding the right place and right time. However for doing anything wrong, they choose none?

*Dada:* When a person is about to do a wrong thing he feels guilty about it. He feels that there are certain forces, dragging him as it were, to do it. He has no choice. When a man does a good thing, he does it out of the fullness of freedom. He would therefore, do the work in the best way possible. He is, therefore, anxious to do the work at the right time and at the right place.

*Jawhrani:* Change is the only constant thing in life. In your view what are the good and bad changes affecting today's society.

*Dada:* The root of all the bad changes is that society has turned away from God. God is the Source of Light. If we turn our back to God, we will walk in the darkness which is our own shadow. If we walk with our face turned to God, our shadow will fall behind us and we shall always walk in the Light.

All we have to do is to, 'Turn back to God!'

*Jawhrani:* Today people assert their rights but conveniently forget their duties. How can this situation be corrected?

*Dada:* People have forgotten to do their duty because they have turned away from God. The moment they begin to live in the love and fear of God, they will know that they are being watched by an invisible Presence and will always move on the path of duty.

*Jawhrani:* Over the centuries, during ongoing wars, special care was taken to protect the lives of artists, writers, poets and such other people and these people used to be lodged in Special Secured Cells. It was ardently believed that these people could rebuild the ruined establishments and cities. Why are such considerations absent in modern days?

*Dada:* This is because people no longer live in the love and fear of God. They think only of the self: they do not think of others or of society or humanity in general.

A man who manufactured spurious medicines was asked: "Did you think of the harm they would do to helpless, sick people?" He answered: "What is that to me? I get my profit and that is all I am concerned with."

*Jawhrani:* Why are people so keen that their own and family's name should continue even after their death, knowing fully well that everything will die eventually and that nothing can matter for them after death?

*Dada:* The three Gods people worship today are: (1) Pleasure (2) Possessions, wealth, gold (3) Power, name, fame, earthly greatness. All the three are passing; alone the Name of God abides. People today are thirsty for their name and their family's name.

*Jawhrani:* Evil has existed through ages? Is it eternal? Will it ever end? Since centuries people have been trying to eradicate evil from the earth but have not succeeded, should these efforts be

continued?

*Dada:* Evil is darkness. It is a shadow. It does not have any real substance. It cannot last forever.

A room may have been in darkness for a hundred years, go and strike a match and kindle a flame, the darkness will vanish instantaneously. It will not say, I have lived for a hundred years give me sometime to get ready and leave.

Darkness has no substance. It is only absence of light. Likewise, evil has no substance, it is only a shadow. It will vanish the moment the Kingdom of Heaven descends on earth.

*Jawhrani:* Dada, we are indeed blessed today with the pearls of wisdom you have showered on us and for the benefit of humanity at large.