

Dasturji Kutar Remembered

by

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On Roz Din Mah Avan Monday 8th April 2013, a jashan will be performed at Rustomframna Agiary to mark the 38th death anniversary of the late Dasturji Kaikhushru Mahiyar Kutar. The annual function is organised by Dadar Jashan Trust when his students pay their respects to their revered teacher.

Dasturji Kutar was a teacher extraordinary. His talks were replete with examples anecdotes, quotations borrowed from various sources. His style of delivery, his mastery over the language, his powerful oratory, his humorous anecdotes made a deep impression on his audience. He taught that Zoroastrianism was a way of life. His religious instruction class would begin with a humbandagi – which is the second paragraph of each geh.

His outlook on life is reflected in the following quotation:

“This world is all a fleeting show
For man’s attractions given;
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow
There is nothing true but heaven”

According to him life was a duty.

“I slept and dreamt that life was beauty
I woke and found that life was duty”

“Every moment has its duty who the future can foretell,
Then why put off till tomorrow what today can do as well”

His philosophy of life:

“Our ingrace in life is naked and bare,
Our progress through life is trouble and care
Our agress out of it we know not where
But doing well here we shall do well there”

To him life was worth living.

“Tell me not in mournful numbers
Life is but an empty dream
For the soul is dead that slumbers
And things are not what they seem.
Life is real life is earnest
And the grave is not its goal
Dust thou art to dust returnest
Was not spoken of the soul”

Throughout his life he preached the message of happiness, simplicity, humility.

*Harroz nai ek shaadi hai, harroz mubarakbadi hai;
Har raat hansi, harraat khushi, har wakt amiri hai baba
Jab aashak mast khuda hooay phir kya dalgiri hai baba.*

Commit all your work unto God.

*Mera muzh mein kachhu nahin jo kuch hai so tera
Tera tuzh ko sopat hai, phir kya lagega mera*

A professor went to a village and asked the wisest man in the village to have a dialogue with him. The villagers directed him to an old shepherd whom they considered the most intelligent amongst them. The professor, unimpressed by the shepherd's simplicity started querying him from which university he had graduated, whether he had read Shakespeare, whether he had heard of Plato and Socrates, etc. The shepherd had never heard of these men.

He humbly replied:

“The daily labour of the bee
Awakes my soul to industry.
Who can observe the careful ant
And not provide for future want.
The hen who from the chilly egg
With pious wings protects her care
And every fowl that flies at large
Instructs me in a parent's charge.
My dog the trustiest of its kind
With gratitude inflames my mind
I mark his true his faithful way
And in my service copy Tray.”

“Thy fame is just the sage replies
Thy virtue proves thee truly wise,
Pride often guides the author's pen
Books have affected the lives of men
But he who studies nature's laws
From certain truths his maxims draws.”

Another anecdote – a dialogue between an oarsman and a professor who wanted to cross the river:

The professor asked the oarsman – “Do you know about Galileo and the earth going round the sun?” “No, sir” replied the oarsman. “Then your one-fourth life is wasted.” said the professor. “Have you heard of Newton and the apple falling from the tree by force of gravity?” asked the professor. “No, sir.” Replied the oarsman. “Then half your life is wasted” remarked the professor. “Have you read about Shakespeare and Socrates?” queried the professor. “No, sir” said the oarsman. “Then three quarters of your life is lost” said the professor. There arose a storm. The boat was being tossed about in the water. The oarsman asked the professor: “Do you know swimming? if not your entire life is lost, for I shall swim and reach the shore and you will be drowned.”

Each story had a moral and a meaning. Character is the sum total of all virtues.

Contentment is natural wealth

Luxury, artificial poverty

Tushnamaiti Vahishta A contented life is the best.

For prayer he used to say:

“Let prayer be the key of the morning and the lock of the evening.”

“God does not look at the oratory of our prayers how eloquent they are; nor at their arithmetic how many they are, nor at their geometry, how long they are; nor at their logic how methodical they are; but he looks at their sincerity, how spiritual they are.”

“More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.”

Live to some purpose. Life is not given to be squandered away at your will. Each act of your life is recorded in heaven to answer for good or for ill. As you sow so shall you reap.

He used to lay stress on charity.

“He only truly lives whose charity is free

But he who never gives is dead as dead can be”

Quoting from the third line of Yatha Ahu Vairyo prayer, he used to say those who look after the welfare of the poor please Ahura Mazda.

Sakhavat hame dard hara dawas Charity is the medicine for all ailments.

If wrong you do, if false you play,
In summer among the flowers;
You must atone you shall repay,
In winter among the showers.

For every up there is a down,
For every folly shame
Retribution follows guilt
As burning follows flame.

He had an abiding faith in God. He was always optimistic and positive minded. Ours is a religion of happiness. *Ushta ahmai ya ahmai ushta kamaichit.* Happiness unto him who makes others happy. **According to him the life or strength of a community is not in its numbers but in its religion.** Our religion is based on universal truths. Our laws of religion are in tune with nature. There is no need for reforms in religion. He was like a rock of Gibraltar, firm in his convictions.

His message to the Parsi community: “The Parsi Zoroastrians have always been recognised for their unbounding charity, integrity, mercy and justice. They also made their mark as fearless opponents of wrongs, for forthright habit of speech and action and as pioneers. Let the Parsis of today follow in the footsteps of their ancestors. The Zoroastrians have a heritage second to none. We must try and live upto this heritage.

We seem to have forgotten the importance of physical and mental fitness, explicit faith in our great and beautiful religion and the pursuit of noble and original ideas. It is not for us to mix and lose our identity. We must float like droplets of oil in stormy oceans of water, resisting all pressures to disintegrate them. According to him, religion teaches man his duty. Religion alone humanises us. Without it all men are savages. Ahura Mazda tells Zarathushtra: “I prefer married persons and those with children to those who are unmarried and those without children” The highest form of charity is to give spiritual knowledge which we students gained from him. They never die who live in our hearts. On this day we respectfully remember him and will continue to strive and spread his message of the religion of the good life.

*As a tribute to him a book **WORDS OF WISDOM** Quotations, Anecdotes, Verses from the teachings of Dasturji Kaikhushroo Mahiyar Kutar compiled by Marzban Giara has been published and is available from him for Rs.30/-*