

31. Dr. Kamtaprasad Jain

Dr. Kamtaprasad Jain has been a great persona in the service of the society; he was highly learned and successful editor of many great books. He expanded the religion of non-violence in India and many foreign countries through world Jain mission. Whole of his life was devoted to the religion and service to the society. He was always eager to expand the principles of non-violence and piety of Jainism throughout the world. He has propagated Jainism in the world through literature and thereby earned deep reverence from the Jain community.

Birth and Childhood:

Dr. Kamtaprasadji was born on 3 May 1901 at Camp Belapur (now in Pakistan). His father Lala Pragdas and mother Bhagwatidevi had poured religious fervor in him from his childhood. He received best teachings from his mother as did Shivaji and Gandhiji. His childhood was passed in Hyderabad (Sindh) and it was here that he received his school-education. He had acquired knowledge of Hindi; Sanskrit, Urdu and Sindhi languages through private teacher and this helped him in his literary and cultural activities in later life. He started writing articles on various subjects from his age of eighteen years. He obtained school education up to standard ninth only and had not done even matriculation and yet he could obtain extensive knowledge in several subjects by his hard labor, right impressions and studious nature. He became a sea of knowledge by his own efforts and intuition.

Family Life:

Dr. Kamtaprasad Jain married twice. His first marriage was in very early age but the wife expired unexpectedly. His father pressed him for second marriage and submitting his wishes, he married for the second time at the age of 23. He had three children by this marriage, the son Virendra and daughters Sarojini and Suman. The other children died in their childhood. His father was a Banker-contractor in army-wing. He had his branches at Peshawar, Ravalpindi, Hyderabad etc and Kamtaprasad also joined in this firm in 1920. The Indian bankers were removed from the defense forces in 1930 and had worked as land-broker for some years. His health worsened later and he expired on May 20, 1948.

Kamtaprasadji established himself at Aliganj (Uttar Pradesh-India) from 1931 and started working for social services. He was appointed as honorary magistrate from 1931 to 1949 and was taken up as Assistant Collector in 1943 where he worked up to 1948. Even while working on such high positions, he continued to work for the society honestly and sincerely. The common people praised him very much for his dedicated services. He was president and secretary of several committees and celebrations and his works in these fields indicate his eagerness to work for the society and common people.

National and International Honors:

Dr. Kamtaprasad had received special honors from national and international institutions:

- Gold medal for his essay on Lord Mahavir from Yashovijayaji Jain Granthmala.
- Silver medal for his essay on Hindi Literature from Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.
- Degree of LL.D. by the Jain Academy established by Barrister Shri Champatray Jain in its Conference at Karachi held in 1942.
- Degree of Ph.D. for his comparative study of all religions by the Christian International Penmenical Church of Canada.
- Degree of Sahitya Manishi by the Sanskrit Parishad of Benaras

- Degree of Siddhnatacharya at the time of Golden Jubilee celebrations of Jain Siddhanta Bhavan, Aara
- He was appointed as a Member of Royal Asiatic Society, London.
- He was appointed as a Member of Ksarling Society of Germany.
- Highest honor from the International Religions Union of Central America
- Welcome-secretary at the Fifteenth World Vegetarian Conference at Delhi.
- President of the Jain Religion and Nature Department at the Oriental Conference held at Ahmedabad.

Donations:

He had donated thousands of rupees for conducting several activities including the office of All World Jain Mission. He gave financial assistance to several orphans and poor students. He contributed liberally for publication and distribution of several books.

An Accredited Editor:

He was working as the first editor of Veer periodical from 1923 and did his work continuously for 30 years. He worked in "Voice of Non-violence" and "Ahinsa Vani" also for many years. Ahinsa Vani was famous in the field of Hindi and Voice of Non-violence in other fields both in India and foreign countries. His art of editing was highly impressive. He always inspired and encouraged new persons in literature.

Love for History:

Dr. Kamtaprasadji was especially interested in Jain History. He had deep knowledge in this subject and gave many books to Jain community. His History of Jain Community, Consolidated Jain History in four parts, Collection of ancient Jain articles and History of Jain Warriors are most outstanding.

Service to Literature:

The famous literary giant Shri Kanaiyalal Mishra-Prabhakar wrote for Dr. Kamtaprasadji-Jain literature was his subject, Jain history was the line of his thinking and his mission to remove the black clouds covering the Jainism and attracts the whole world by the light of Jainism.

Dr. Kamtaprasadji has wrote nearly 100 books in Hindi and English during his lifetime and the subjects of these books include History, Religion, Scriptures and literature. The following books are of importance:

- Maharani Chelana
- Satya Marg (The path of Truth)
- Jain Viranganao (Brave Jain women)
- Jain Veeron Ka Itihaas (History of Jain warriors)
- Digambar and Digambar Mooni Mendicant
- Veer Pathavali (a collection of prayers)
- Bhagwan Mahavir ki Ahinsa Aur Bharat ke Rajyo par Unka Prabhav (non-violence of Lord Mahavir and its influence on the states of India)
- Patitoddharak Jain Dharm (Jain Religion Savior of down trodden)
- Consolidated Jain History
- Lord Mahavir

- Holy places of Jainism and their visits
- Non-violence and its influence on the world
- First Tirthankar Lord Hrushabhdev
- Devotion and Worship
- Short phrases from Swamy Kundkundacharya
- Ahinsa-Right Solution of World Problems
- Some Historical Jain Kings and Heroes
- The religion of Tirthankars.

In addition to this, he has published several booklets for propagating Jainism and non-violence.

The Religion of Tirthankars:

An exhaustive book of about 514 pages in English was published in 1964. This was the greatest and last work of Dr. Kamtaprasadji. This book was written after study of hundreds of other books. In the words of Dr. Kastoorchand Kasliwal, Dr. Kamtaprasadji was the greatest scholar in Jain literature. His contribution to literary community is invaluable. It is difficult to see the simplicity, sympathy, nobility and learning like his anywhere else. He served the literary world, society and particularly Jainism beyond limits by following the footsteps of Shree Veerchand Gandhi, Barrister Champatray and Shri J.L. Jaini.

Last Journey:

He was suffering from piles during the last 30 years of his life. He was bleeding heavily in latrine. He was worse in September 1964. During these years, his wife also passed away. He was not able to sleep at night because of his ill health but his son Shri Virendrakumar and daughters used to discuss spiritual matters with him so that he may feel some relief. Even though he was so sick, he did not accept any allopathic medicine. He was taking only Ayurvedic and Homeopathic medicines. He was firm on this point till the end of his life.

It was decided to shift him from Aliganj to a better place for better treatment on Sunday, the 17th May, 1964, corresponding to the sixth day of bright half of the month of Vaishakh in V.S. 2021, because his health was taking a serious turn but he passed away during the journey itself. His face did not appear to be paining even at the time of his last breath; it appeared to be smiling. His son and daughter were reciting Navkar Mantras so that he might hear the same. He breathed his last with the voice of "Namo Arh..." The country, the world and particularly the Jains lost a dedicated servant, highly learned and most outstanding literary figure. Let us nurture well the tree of World Jain Mission, which is sown and watered by him. This will be the highest tribute to this world personality. Let us also follow his ideals of service to the society, the work, the orphans and work for Jainism upholding the first principle of non-violence so that his soul is at peace in heaven.