

Interacting with a spiritual guru

By Dr Arvind I Korba

Book Review:

Title: *Moments with a Master*
Author: Sandhya S Mankani
Publisher: Sterling
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Pages: 212
Price: Rs 150/-



journal. The book has been lovingly published by Sterling paperbacks with a beautiful collage on the cover in green, red and yellow. Priced modestly at just Rs 150, the book is indeed quite affordable.

The Master, known as Dada JP Vaswani was born on August 2, 1918, in Hyderabad, Sind, now in

Pakistan. He was the eldest son among seven siblings born to Pahaljai and Krishnadevi Vaswani. A brilliant student, he excelled in science, and took a Master's degree in Physics, whose thesis was assessed by Dr CV Raman, the Nobel Prize-winning Physicist. Despite his professional potential, when he came into the fold of Sadhu TL Vaswani, his uncle and Master, young Jashan, abandoned all his worldly ambitions. He became fixed on only one object - God.

After the partition of India, and Independence, Sadhu TL Vaswani and Dada JP Vaswani, along with their disciples, came to India and set up the Mission in Pune. After Sadhu Vaswani passed away in 1966, Dada has been at the helm of the Mission.

This book tells us how Dada has become a Master. Even at his age he is a seeker. To wit, his desire to learn proper Hindi and his ability to speak in Hindi for his discourses along with English and Sindhi. His love of books, his love of vegetarian food, his love of human beings, all come through vividly in these interactions with his young American disciple. The beauty of this book is the many poems, and verses from Hindu epics and scriptures, that are interspersed in between the journal chapters in prose, as if they are separate chapters. Indeed an exemplary book.

Sandhya S Nankani is a 27-year old freelance writer based in the USA. She was fortunate in spending her life on three continents. She was born in Africa when her parents were in Ghana. At the age of six she came to Asia, to Pune in India with her sister, a couple of years older, at her maternal grandmother's place and was doubly fortunate in spending about five years, schooling at St Mira, run by the Sadhu Vaswani Mission. At the age of 11, she left India to join her parents who had migrated to the USA. She graduated and became a freelance writer. She met Dada JP Vaswani in the USA and helped him write his press releases. She also interviewed him. In July 2001 she visited Pune and was given permission to continue her discussions. The visit also coincided with the 83rd birthday of Dada, which happened to fall on August 2 that year. At that time the author's personal life was in turmoil, as her father was battling terminal illness and she had also severed a close personal friendship. She had herself become a seeker of spiritual solace. This book is the result of her odyssey.

Moments with a Master chronicles the magical interactions between this young seeker and the spiritual master, Dada. It is a part-memoir, Part-biography and part-pilgrimage