



# SHADOWS OF LIFE

• DR RAM LAKHAN PRASAD



**We never got so busy making our living that we forgot to  
make our life better.**

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**Ram Lakhan Prasad**

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**Wise Words Of My Guru**

When I was in primary school  
one of my teachers advised  
me to

- Be strong but not rude,
- Be kind but not weak,
- Be bold but not bully,
- Be humble but not timid,
- Be proud but not arrogant,
- Be helpful but not careless.

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# PROLOGUE

**The** strongest people aren't always the people who win, but the people who don't give up when they lose. That happens to be me. This creativity is developed all because I needed to heal the wounds of my past and express some of the episodes of my life.

If I did not do this I was going to bleed and may have needed to bandage the bleeding with more food, alcohol, drugs, work, smoke or even sex but eventually it has all oozed through the stains of my life. The readers must find the strength to open the wounds, stick their hands inside, pull out the core of all the pleasure and pain that I have held in the past which have become my memories.

By expressing these here I have made peace with my inner self. Every single expression of the event in my life- shadows, achievements, family life, work life as well as the social and civic life have made me smarter, stronger and wiser than I was yesterday.

Life is not always fair because some people are born into better environments, some have better genetics and some are in the right place at the right time. I wanted to express it all,

relevant as well as irrelevant. All that mattered to me was my acceptance as to where I was and figure out where I wanted to be and then do whatever I can today and everyday, to hold my head high and keep moving forward.

My life has been a pretty interesting story as you can read and visualize. Sometimes you as the reader can tell that my life itself is such a story that the story has to come to my life. Probably I was made an idealist first and then I was surrounded with unidealistic circumstances all round that became my shadows of life.

The bundle of life situations that I have expressed and exposed could be classed as ecstatic as well as weirdness of life. These together with some contradictions of life often make great stories.

Enjoy reading.



## FOREWORD

**There** is no doubt at all in my mind that a collection of many invaluable pieces of wisdom have been created by Dr Ram Lakhan Prasad in his *Shadows of Life*. Dr Prasad showed us that he has a knack for expressing some very profound and important notions in an amusing and interesting way.

The pungent and personal writing style has captured good ideas which are eminently sensible and beautifully sensitive for the readers. I enjoyed reading the book and have come to know Dr Prasad a lot better as a straight-shooter and firm believer.

There are those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who wonder what happened but Dr Prasad is one of those rare people who really has shown us that he knows how to make things happen.

Some books are interesting, others are entertaining and a few are terrifically inspiring but *Shadows of Life* is all three. So anyone who wants to make more of him/her should read this remarkable presentation.

An Admirer of Ram Lakhan Prasad.

# INTRODUCTION

## SHADOWS OF MY LIFE

**Someone** had told me at school to always keep my face toward the sunshine and the shadows will fall behind me but I did not ever worry or have any fear about my or anyone else's shadows. I loved shadows and gradually I found out that my thoughts have always been the shadows of my feelings that were sometimes brighter, darker, simpler or even complicated. However, I never hesitated to express them whenever I had the chance to do so. This is my opportunity to let you visualize my shadows.

I have never been one of those people who wake up in the morning and beg the day to work for me but I always got up and went to do something for a change. I took every day as it unfolded whether bright, cloudy or muggy. Regular and continuous adjustments to the day ahead had been my nature and habit. Of course, my yesterday propelled my today and all my today led me to my tomorrow. Each of these vital links of my living preached me a variety of lessons that I treasured and moved on.

Then I loved to keep myself occupied either in rewarding or leisure activities but my favourite period of the day was the golden hour in the evening just as the sun was about to set and we get those lovely shadows to make everything look gold and yellow. The love of the evening shadows was inculcated into me by my grandparents and parents while we lived on the mixed farm in the panoramic village of Fiji known as Botini in Sabeto, Nadi.

I was compelled to believe that there were infinite passageways of the shadows with a variety of vehicles to transport everyone into the light. However, there seemed something special about the shadows of my life because I could make my own mind up about whatever was lurking in them. While most people think that shadows follow, precede or surround us or objects but for me the truth was that they surrounded all my words, ideas, desires, deeds, impulses and even memories.

Thus, it was by the shadows of my life and the hoary past and their fantastic silhouettes on the external screen of every way of life and philosophy that I could by experience, visualize, read and hear to check them as I went along. Comparing them to finally trace out how the people had intelligently or with any selfish motives transcribed the scriptures.

All the shadows of the past have been fictitious for me and I have tried to build my life on real solid foundations. Now I say what I do and I do what I say. I win or I lose but I have learnt to accept and tolerate them all.

For many of us who think differently from the traditionalists, the big priority for us is to get out from the prescribed shadows and make our own way of life rather than dwelling in the stories of the past that are no longer credible but full of obsolete activities to connect with nature and God. It is crucial as well as vital that every personality of the new generation have a revised view of their own ways of life and have a humanistic stake in the welfare of humanity.

Like the moral test of any sound government is to treat everyone equally so is my feelings for all. Those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped. I have developed similar dictates and conducts for all these members of the society and the community.

Despite this firm belief, how many people make themselves abstract to appear profound? I feel that the most useful part of abstract terms are the shadows they keep

creating to hide a vacuum. I know that in faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadows to blind those who do not.

When we talk of human, religious, social or economic rights, they are not the privilege granted by the few but they remain the liberty entitlement for all. These rights by definition include the rights of all humans whether those in the dawn of life, the dusk of life or the shadows of life.

In the name of various religions we have tried to divide this world into fragments that is hiding in various kinds of shadows. We need immediate liberation and begin to treat everyone as human beings.

Now that my introductory remarks have given me a way forward I shall proceed. Let me place one disclaimer here. I never counted myself as a saint or a wealthy being or a celebrity but a simple person who was happy and had adequately contentment with the achievements and successes that came to him upon appropriate efforts. There is no element of boasting, bragging or self praise but letting my readers appreciate that life is worth living well.

## **Chapter One**

### **LIFE AS I HAVE KNOWN**

**The** readers should not make any mistake between my personality and my attitude to life because my personality is who I am but my attitude largely depends on who I am confronting, conversing or interacting with.

Life as many of us have known, is definitely a series of ordinary but natural and spontaneous changes which should not be resisted because this resistance will ultimately create and cause sadness and sorrow. Therefore, the people who wish to lead a good and real life let reality be reality by letting things flow naturally forward in whatever way they like; up, down or sideways.

One of my main objectives in life has been to find happiness and I knew that happiness would not come to anyone who did not learn to appreciate whatever they already have. Often I tried to evaluate things in life and the best thing I assessed and could do was not to think too much, not to wonder a lot, not to let loose my imagination or even not to obsess but just keep breathing and developing strong faith that everything would work out for the best. In fact I have never wanted a perfect life but I always yearned for a happy life.

I truly believed that one day or someday in the future everything would turn good and make perfect sense. Therefore, presently and for now I needed to laugh at the confusion, smile through the tears and keep reminding myself that everything happens for a reason. I went out in search for all the possible reasons that made some sense to me. This proactive stance made me satisfied and gave me a lot of real happiness. It was after a long period of time that I came to realize that happiness only comes when we firmly believe in what we are doing, know exactly what we are doing and above all love all that we are doing.

I then reached a reasonable conclusion for myself that doing what I liked was my freedom and liking what I was doing was my happiness. There is no assumption here that there was no sadness and no pain in my life but I quickly gathered that there were two kinds of pain in my life; one that hurt me and the other that changed me. As a general rule to myself I would never allow the feeling of any negative things to enter my life because I know full well that it spoils all the good things I possess. So I always choose to be positive and happy.

I tried my hard not to let my yesterday use up a lot of my today. Very soon in life I found out that my life was too short for any bitterness,

any hatred, any kind of deceit and despondency but needed love, inspiration and enthusiasm. Consequently I too commanded myself not to be bitter about anything or anybody.

I never wanted to be alone and lonely but in company of my family, friends, relatives and colleagues because I strongly felt that the worst loneliness was to not to be plainly comfortable with myself. There were some of the gravest loneliest moments in my life when I sadly watched my whole world falling apart and all I could do was to stare blankly. But I did not let my loneliness bother me. I got out and mixed with people, talked, played, had fun, presented speeches at gatherings and read a lot. Thus found some worthy solutions to my loneliness.

I kept reminding me constantly throughout my life that life was not always perfect because I knew that I will not always get what I wanted. Although it did hurt me a lot, I had to accept the truth that what should have happened had happened. Who should have left had to leave but whatever threw me off course would always bring me to where I needed to be. I pressed on regardless.

## **Chapter two**

### **LIFE EXPERIENCES**

I was told early in life that I should never regret anything in life because if it was good it would be wonderful but if by any chance it was bad it would be an experience to consider later. So from my childhood I was conditioned to be strong enough to stand alone, of course smart enough to know when I needed assistance and brave enough to ask for help. Consequently, many of my difficult roads often took me to exciting and great destinations.

Life went on and whenever there were obstacles or sorrows or frustrations I knew how to put on a happy face and keep moving with greater determination. This experience was somewhat hurting but I learnt to survive. My life was not easy but I never let it deter me from moving ahead with additional vigour.

I never learnt to put my life behind me but let all my memories go back therefore my life was always ahead of me motivating me, guiding me and inspiring me. Everyday was a new day and a challenging experience that I never failed to seize and make the best use of them. I got what I wanted most of the time through my hard work and consistent efforts. These became my life experiences.

It was never easy to fill my life with valuable experiences but I was able to manage this gradually and then material things began to have very little interest and concern for me. I then had stories of my experiences to narrate to family members, friends and colleagues but I had very little stuff to show and tell. I gradually became rich in experience but poor in material things. As a result of these experiences in my life I have lived, loved, liked, disliked, found, lost, missed a few things and at times was hurt as well but I did not deter from accumulating my experiences. I have trusted myself and my people and at times made a few mistakes but most of all I have learned a lot of valuable lessons in the process.

I could never disagree with my high school literary personalty C S Lewis who among other things wrote that God allows us to experience the low points of life in order to teach us lessons that we could learn in no other way. I never let God move away from my side and that has been one of the most potent reasons for recollecting and reminising some of my good expeirences.

One thing is quite certain about my life experiences. I became strong because sometime in the past I was weak. I turned fearless because I was afraid in the past and I

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