

॥ श्री स्वामिनारायणो विजयतेतराम् ॥



Blessed be the village Vadatal, Lord Swaminarayan made it His abode.



sahajANAND

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Shastri Swami
Dr. Santvallabhdasji

EDITORS

Parshad Shri Lalji Bhagat
Shri Harendra P. Bhatt

DESIGN & CONCEPT

Hari Smruti
Ravi K. Barot
Jnan Baug, Vadtal

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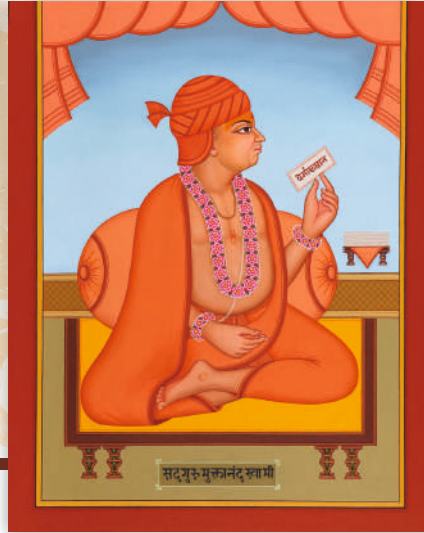


vadtalmandir@gmail.com



www.vadtalmandir.org

Prelude



H. H. Acharya

Shri Rakeshprasadji Maharaj

— Sadguru Muktanand Swami —

Muktanand Swami possessed pure character; he was sweet and effective in delivering religious discourse, he was a very good orator of Ramkatha. He was also a good dancer. Besides this, he was a very good singer, a nadi-Vaid. His Sampradaayik literature is very profound; all these characteristics was the result of the grace of the Lord.

Nilkanth Varni met Muktanand Swami at Loj and got a satisfactory answer of his question about Jiva, Ishvar, Maya, Brahm and Parbrahman. Muktanand Swami was honest enough to confess that the answer was the result of the teaching of his guru, Ramanand Swami. So, Nilkanth Varni decided to stay at the Ashram till the arrival of Ramanand Swami. Muktanand Swami gave him a new name Sarjudas. The relationship of young Nilkanth Varni and the mentor Muktanand Swami has become a memorable chapter of the history of Swaminarayan Sampraday.

Lord Swaminarayan in Vachnamrut Sarangpur 3 opined that 'I had seen Muktanand Swami for the first time at Lojpur. Ever since then his faith and realisation of the glory of God have always remained fresh...' This is how He evaluated Muktanand Swami years after his first meeting at Loj. In Vachnamrut Gadhada Antya 27, He says, 'At first, by nature I used to remain totally detached but wanted to have Darshan of Ramanand Swami. So I obeyed the instructions of Muktanand Swami but I did nothing that my mind liked.'

Yet, Nilkanth Varni was bold enough to suggest Muktanand Swami to conceal a hole in the wall kept to accept the coal from the adjoining house as it symbolises a hole in the life of saintlihood!

Nilkanth Varni also asked to discontinue the practise of combined holy meetings of men and women, which also Muktanand Swami accepted. Inspite of this, Nilkanth Varni obeyed every instruction regarding manual labour of the hermitage. Muktanand Swami was the Mahant of the hermitage while Nilkanth Varni was a neophyte there. The virtues like courtesy, understanding, obedience and the need of the Satsang prevailed in Muktanand Swami.

Once Muktanand Swami and Nilkanth Varni went out of the Ashram for meditation. Muktanand Swami was having a newly coloured Tumbadi with him and he feared that lest any bird vitiate it. Nilkanth Varni understood the conflict of Muktanand Swami as he was the Purna Purushottam. So, Nilkanth Varni said to Muktanand Swami, 'Swami ! Dhyan - meditation is more important than the Tumbadi. 'Muktanand Swami accepted the rebuke without any grudge as both had a strong bondage of friendship.

Likewise, Muktanand Swami also expressed whatever he felt to Sahjand Swami. Once, Muktanand Swami was in Kuchchha for Satsang and Sahajanand Swami was moving around Sorath with the movement of Samadhi Prakran. Muktanand Swami did not like the movement. He came back from Kuchchha and met Sahjanand Swami at Kalvani. He firmly said to Sahjanand Swami, 'Maharaj ! Diyo pakhand meli, Satsang ma n thavu feli; Samadhi nathi kai soyali , e to mota mota yogine pan doyal; e to jene tene kem thay ? Bija maane pan amne n manaay. 'Muktanand Swami said, 'O Maharaj ! Give up the Pakhand, an irreligious and pretentious activity. Please, do not

be feli, irresponsible; Samadhi is not easy, even the big Yogis find it difficult to achieve; and how can that happen to everybody ? Others may believe it but we will not. 'Muktanand Swami had this courage to say to the Acharya of Uddhav Sampraday because they had mutual respect for each other. When Muktanand Swami realised the fact of the Samadhi Prakran, he immediately wrote a lyric - Jay Sadguru Swami... which later on became the Arti of the Swaminarayan Sampraday.

Once, Sahjanand Swami asked Muktanand Swami to go to the court of Gayakvad at Baroda for shashtrarth, religious debate. He went and presented his case successfully. He said, Sahjanand Swami is Sarvopari and He Himself is Purna Purushottamnarayan. He proved this by quoting references from the scriptures of Sanatan Dharma. This proud of Swaminarayan Sampraday is the result of the true knowledge of Uddhav Sampraday and pure character of Muktanand Swami.

Moreover, in Surat, Muktanand Swami successfully sent the ghosts of a haunted houses of a street to Badrikashram but never performed any miracle as he lived the life of a true saint. He made the people of Surat the followers of Swaminarayan Sampraday. Once in Amdavad an opponent mixed poison in the sandal wood paste and applied it on the forehead of Muktanand Swami. Muktanand Swami suffered a lot because of that poison but followed the traditions of Sampraday faithfully.

Sahjanand Swami once asked Muktanand Swami, 'Swamiji ! You should write the life story of your Ishtdev. You should narrate about His nature, character, message, Dharma and His glory in religious books because such literature would strengthen the Sampraday in future. So, till the last breathe of your life, you should write books, granths, kirtans of your sampradaya. 'Muktanand Swami followed the command of his Ishtdev. The result was a vast horde of literature. Muktanand Swami wrote 30 volumes which is published in a collection called 'Muktanand Kavya' and his Kirtans are published in 'Kirtan Muktaharam.' Muktanand Swami wrote in Sanskrit and Prakrit languages in prose and poetry. He even worked as one of the four compilers of Vachnamrut.

Muktanand Swami wrote as per the command of Sahjanand Swami and that is why Sahjanand Swami remembers Muktanand Swami in Vachnamrut, Satsangijivan and Shikshapatri often.

Sahjanand Swami once said, '... If there are bad feelings and thoughts in your mind, then the chanting of Muktanand Swami, would clear all the bad feelings immediately. Such is the power of Muktanand Swami. Shri Hari always praised Muktanand Swami, respected Muktanand Swami, consulted Muktanand Swami and always considered him as a real Sant. Thus, Lord Swaminarayan has praised Muktanand Swami in various ways; but, this is only a glimpse of innumerable qualities possessed by Muktanand Swami. That is why he was considered the Mother of the Satsang. We should listen to his life story, ponder over it, and try to follow some of his virtues. If that is done, it is also the worship of the Lord.

Epigram

वैरायते सुरभ्दावः प्रदानं हरणायते।
दर्पभूताभिभूतस्य विद्या मौर्ख्यशतायते॥

When one is possessed by insolence, his friendship becomes enmity, his offerings become burglary and his knowledge becomes unadulterated stupidity in hundred folds.

There was a Baniya devotee called Uddhavji who had involved himself in selfless devotion and who chanted the name of Lord Swaminarayan night and day. Once house breakers attacked his residence. They caught him and took him to the open, barren land. They cut a branch of babul tree having many pricking thorns.

“If you do not pay us the money demanded by us we will surely thresh you with this babul baton” they said. When they raised the baton to beat the devotee got terrified.

He thought, “how shall I be able to bear the beating and pricking of thorns.

There is no money in the house and how can I pay money and save myself from these thieves? My death is certain.

He began offering earnest prayers to Shri Hari and urged and beseeched the Lord to save him from the calamity.

In response to the earnest prayers of Uddhavji the Lord appeared there and

gave him darshan. By looking at the appearance of the Lord the devotee felt pleased by heart.

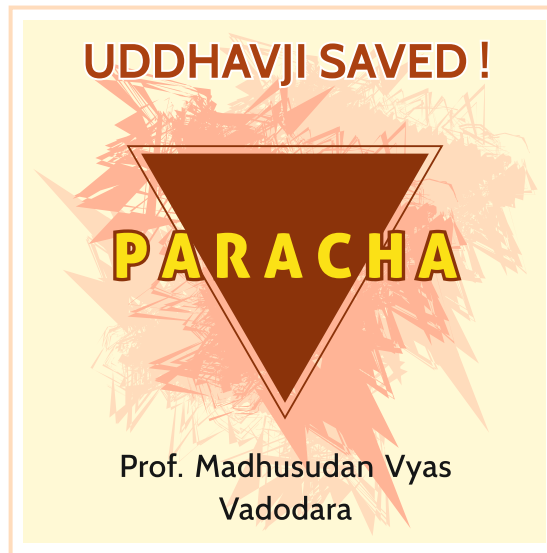
Tears began to flow from his eyes and he spoke in choked voice. “O Lord! I feel blessed as you have taken pity on this poor devotee. If You had not come at this crucial moment my death at the hands

of this robber was sure and certain.”

When he touched the feet of the Lord the shelter of the shelterless Shri Hari spoke, “O devotee do not have any type of fear, I will not let you suffer even a little. You shall be able to return home without getting any punishment from the house breakers.”

After speaking these words the Lord left that place and went to the wife of that robber.

The Lord told the woman, “Your husband is a sinner. He brings wealth by torturing the devotees of God. At once get that devotee released from the clutches of your husband.” The Lord set out from

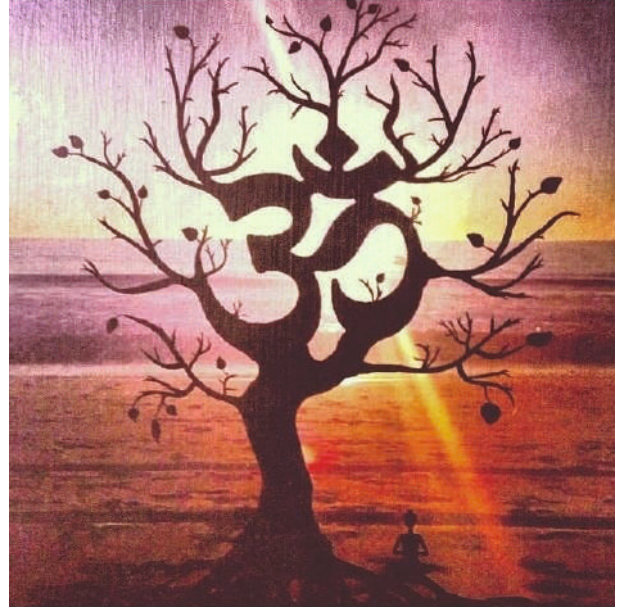


there after telling these words. Then the thieves brought the man to his house and kept him locked for one night. Then the wife of the robber said, “You caught this fellow and brought him here and by troubling this devotee you have committed the crime of the Lord.”

“If you want to be free from that crime please donate garments to this man and put him back to the place from where you have brought him.” Then the thief followed the advice of his wife. He sent back the devotee after offering good clothes to him.

The story of Uddhavji is a living example of the fact that the Lord listens to sincere prayers and he does not make any delay. As soon as the devotee offers earnest prayer the Lord rushes to save him at the spur of the moment.

Sincere prayers rise from the heart and they create the vibrations of sacred telepathy. The vibrations of the devotees heart reach the God's heart and he rushes to save the devotee right at that moment.



The Brihadaranyak Upanishad includes hymns on virtues and ethics. It recommends three virtues

तदेत त्रयं शिक्षेद् दमं दानं दयामिति।

Learn three cardinal virtues : Damah means self-restraint, Daanam means charity and Daya means compassion for all life.

The trees teach us these three virtues.
1. Self-restraint : It bears scorching heat, severe cold and monsoon. 2. Charity : They oblige the human by giving fruits; shadow; fuel ; woods and oxygen which is the life line of every creature whether animate or inanimate. 3. Compassion : They do these obligations without asking in return for that, even if we cut ; kill; burn and uproot them. It is well known that परोपकाराय फलन्ति वृक्षाः। Trees are flourished with flowers and fruits only for the benefit of others.

If the Human wants to learn, the tree is the best Guru on this earth planet.



Health & Spirituality

Dr. Dhanvantari Jha

Food Habit

Ayurveda - The Science
of

Code of conduct for Healthy Body, Mind and Spirit

Why do some individuals consuming wholesome food get afflicted with diseases, while some individuals consuming unwholesome food remain healthy? In this regard, how does one infer that health and disease are influenced by wholesome and unwholesome foods respectively?”

An individual consuming wholesome food will not get afflicted with disease due to the food. Intake of wholesome food alone is not the causative factor for a disease or can prevent diseases. Apart from unwholesome food, there are many other etiological factors that lead to a disease, such as changes in season, intellectual errors, unwholesome contacts, excessive, wrong and over-utilization of senses of sound, touch, vision, taste and smell. These etiological factors can cause diseases in an individual despite wholesome intake of tastes (Rasa) and diet. Hence, an individual taking wholesome food has also been observed to have taken ill.

Similarly, consuming unwholesome diet does not immediately produce untoward effects. All unwholesome food articles are not equally harmful, all the Doshas are not of equal strength, and all the bodies are not capable of preventing disease. Unwholesome food can be more harmful depending upon the habitat, season, combination, potency, and intake in excessive quantity.

The Dosha become acute and extremely difficult to manage when they get associated with multiple factors, treated with wrong therapies, become deep rooted, chronic, get vitiated in one of the ten seats of Prana, and when they afflict vital

centers within the body known as marma.

Individuals, who are excessively obese, emaciated, whose muscles, blood, bones are depleted, who are physically very weak, who are habituated to consuming unwholesome food, who take in inadequate quantities of food, and who have very weak mind cannot withstand diseases. Contrary to this, individuals having opposite qualities to the ones mentioned above are capable of resisting diseases. Thus, unwholesome diet, dosha, and body constitution factors produce diseases

These vitiated dosha stay in the peripheral regions in a dormant state and do not cause any diseases till the season or environment is conducive for them to act. The dosha wait for other favorable provocative factors in the form of the region, season, etc. to cause diseases

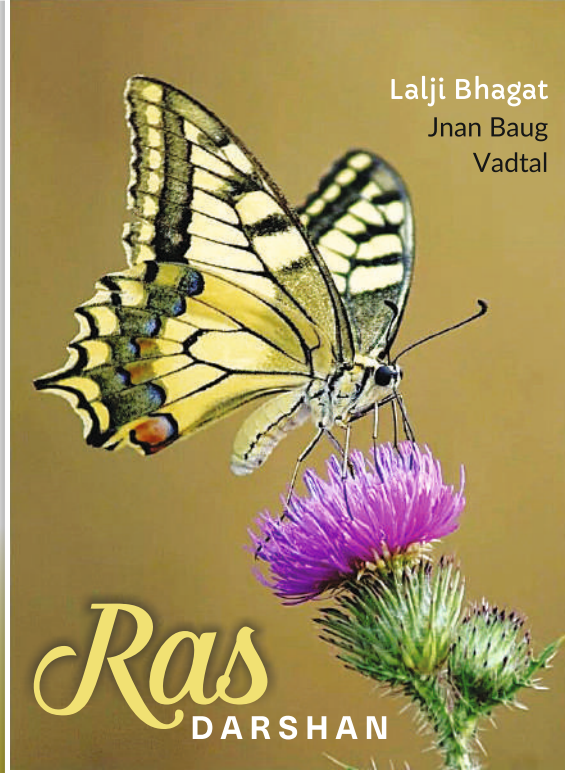
An intelligent individual follows an effective regimen after a thorough evaluation of the diseases and its etiological factors as well as his Prakriti. An individual dominated by Rajas and Tamas mental faculty, on the other hand, follows a regimen that could be pleasant to his senses, without any consideration or evaluation of his condition, the treatment, and his constitution. An intelligent person possesses the qualities of obedience, intelligence, memory, stable, able, purity of speech, tranquility, courage, and follows a wholesome regimen. Ignorant individuals do not possess these qualities as their mind is enveloped in Moha (attachments to possessions) and Rajas. Hence they suffer from various physical and mental disorders.

Where does

Lord Swaminarayan

Reside?

view 3



Lalji Bhagat
Jnan Baug
Vadtal

જ્યાં કોઈ કાળે વ્યસનો ન થાય,
જ્યાં કામ કે ક્રોધ કદિ ન જાય;
સદ્ધર્મને સહુ ચિત્તમાં ચહે છે,
શ્રી સ્વામિનારાયણ ત્યાં રહે છે.

હરિલીલામૃત

"Where addictions do not exist at any time, where lustful desire and anger never tread, where all covet one's Dharma in their heart, Lord Swaminarayan resides there."

When Ekadashi comes use the mobile during the day only when it is inevitable. This is called fasting in the real sense. It is a different kind of fast. The method of fasting changes with the change of time. As modern instruments appear in upgraded new models, we have to upgrade our body by introducing new changes. The method is like this – First catch the ninth day of bright half of every month, then Ekadashi and then full-moon-day – avoid touching mobile on these days. Then if you make your instinct introvert you will see the changes that take place within you. If you put your hand in a bag full of coal it will turn black. In the same way, if you touch mobile all wrong elements will come with it. That is the reason why you should keep mobile–fasting.

So where addictions never enters and lustful desire and anger never tread, Lord Swaminarayan resides there. If you believe that you follow five Vratamanas everyday so you have no addictions but the addiction of mobile is dangerous and very hard to avoid. You have to drive out this addiction from within. Mobile is more dangerous than playing cards. In playing cards the risk is limited but mobile will throw so many bad things in your conscience and you will not be able to recognize it. It will drag you and throw you into a ditch. It will spread disorder in your mind and then you will

say, 'I cannot visualise God during Mansi Puja'. How can you see God? You cannot see God because mobile has thrown plenty of garbage in your conscience.

This point of mobile addiction should be well understood by us. You may not be drinking wine, you may be a good devotee, you may not eat food or drink even water outside of your house but mobile addiction is more harmful than eating or drinking outside the house. Something eaten or drunk is disposed on the next day but if this thing enters your daily life it will trouble you for the rest of life. One who learns control in life can save himself from this addiction. One who wants to live close to God should decide 'I will use the mobile for this much time in a day'. Then if somebody tells you to dial a number you will say, 'I will do it tomorrow'. If you develop such discipline in life most of the troubles will go away, and your mind will be inclined towards chanting Mantra of Lord Swaminarayan and meditating upon Him.

It is our normal practice that we use to recite in Cheshta before going to bed that "The Lord is resting on the bed of love, Muktanand sings the praise of His lotus-feet round the clock, Shyam, the dear one of all the munis goes to sleep." Then

say goodbye and request Shriji Maharaj to return to His place and say now I will continue my activity. If your activity continues it will not allow the Moorti of God to be stable in your mind. So all should decide 'We will use mobile during the day only when it is utmost necessary' and in this way you should reduce the duration of using the mobile. You can use it for 2 or 3 hours per day and then leave it aside. If you can do this, good thoughts will enter your mind and your conscience will become pure. In Kaliyuga everything is mechanical so the type of addiction has also changed. So you should understand the mobile as the most dangerous addiction and try to save yourself from it. Then wrong thoughts will not enter your mind and any wrong action will not be done by you and if wrong things are not done God will remain near you.

This mobile has put life in every house on fire. Almost 15 people in the family may have gathered at any occasion but each of them will be busy with playing mobile game, checking messages, watching news. A single person is not interested in the other person. So this mobile does not allow family members to come closer to each other. For this reason your family life is disturbed and disrupted. If you study it deeply you will see that this is the worst kind of addiction. If you have the addiction of mobile you have to put cross on it. If you keep the addiction then believe in your mind for certain that 'there is a distance of 12 kilometer between me and Shriji Maharaj'. You have to forget that 'I will sit for Dhyana or I will sit for Mansi'. As long as you keep the addiction with you, Lord Swaminarayan will not make entry in your conscience. Lord Swaminarayan resides at the place where addictions never enter.

MOBILE, the most dangerous addiction that keeps us away from our nearest and dearest ones and beloved God.

Jay Swaminarayan !

s a h a j A N A N D



Prof. Harendra P. Bhatt

A letter on behalf of the Governor Sir John Malcom

To,

The most respectable and wise 'Swaminarayan Sahajanand' from his friend Mr. Blane Acting Political in Katthiyawar. - Compliments

"His Excellency the Governor with attendants has arrived in this province, and I am directed by His Excellency to request that if you can you may come to Rajkot to pay His Excellency a visit in camp."

(Signed) Blane,

Acting Political Agent

Moje Ghulka, dated 22nd February, 1830.

Please note : Here the Governor means Sir John Malcolm. Mr. Blane is a friend of Lord Swaminarayan and Sahajanand Swami is "Swaminarayan Sahajanand."

Shri Sahajanand Swami is "most respectable and wise."

This letter is a very valuable reference.

- Manilal C. Parekh

The cradle of the civilizations like Egypt and Babylon and other great civilization of the world was set on the bank of great rivers.

Indian civilization also developed in the Indus valley, which is a part of the great Indus (Sindhu) river.

The epigram “Water is (The elixir of) life is one of the greatest gifts to the world civilization by the Indian civilization. Indian culture and civilization create a balance between the emotional and rational aspect of human life.

It teaches every person to love entire mankind instead of being self-centered. Apart from it our civilization teaches us to extend our love to animals, trees and plants. Indian civilization encourages the reverence for self, for fellowmen for the universe at large. Indian philosophy is very sacred, because it believes in slogans “Let sacred thought come to us from all directions.” This point has been explained by Lord Krishna through the medium of the chapter on Vibhuti Yoga of Bhagavat Gita.

In the ancient time our Rishis had attained oneness with the universe and with trees and entire vegetation they had learnt the lessons of life by identifying themselves with the inanimate world. They watered the plants, trees and creepers by believing them as their own brothers and sisters.

The Deodar tree which is believed as his own son by Shivji had been watered and nourished by Parvatiji. And it has been beautifully described by the great poet Kalidasa in Raghuvamsham. “Parvatiji, the mother of Kartikeya has irrigated this Deodar trees with the nectar like milk from her breasts as it is believed to be her own son by Shivji”. When Kautsa the young disciple of Maharshi Vartantu goes to the world winning yajna performing Raghu, the

king asks about the good health of Arana trees : “I think that the trees in the Ashram which give shade, shelter and comfort to men have not been injured.”

This incident proves that in that time trees were considered as important as human beings. When Shakuntala, the foster daughter of Maharshi Kanva is watering the plants her friend Ansuya says, “These trees are dearer to father Kanva than yourself. For that reason he has asked you to water the plants.” Then Shakuntala replied with affection, “I am watering the plants not because father Kanva has ordered me, but because I love the trees and plants like brothers and sisters.

The fourth verses spoken by Kanva Rishi in the fourth chapter of Abhijnan Shakuntalam written by supreme Sanskrit poet Kalidas contain essence of the entire drama, and this one belongs to that group of verses. In this verse, Kanva Rishi asks the trees in the hermitage to bid farewell to Shakuntala who is departing for the house of her in-laws.

“O Dear trees! That Shakuntala who never drank water before irrigating it to you, though she is fond of beauty and make-up she never picked a leaf from your branch and who believes your first



flowering as a festival is going to the house of her in-laws so all of you bless her by bidding farewell”.

Our ancestors worshipped the Ashvattha tree for its herbal medical qualities and regarded it as the representative of the entire vegetational world. They visualized God in the Pipal tree and sang prayers to it is in fact a part of their sacred vision. As per the vision of our ancestors the Pipal tree symbolizes “The form of Brahma at its root, the form of Vishnu at the middle and the form of Shiva at its top”.

Lord Shree Krishna in Vibhuti chapter of Bhagavat Gita says, “Pipal tree is another form of Mine”. The ladies of Hindu society also worship Pipal tree on some occasions and pray to it to grant long life of their husbands. They observe Vatsavriti Vrata to ask for stability in life.

They ask for the competence and capacity to get back their husband from Yama as it was done by Savitri. Also they ask for long life of

their husband like the life of the Banyan tree. They ask for peace and patience for their family like the patience of a Banyan tree. Also they ask for the expansion of the family like the branches of a Banyan tree.

The life of the trees is like the life of hermits. They stand in scorching heat of

summer and give cool shade to others. They give sweet fruits to somebody who throws stones at it. The wood of tree becomes useful after its death. Though the tree serves entire world it does not expect anything in return. Our ancestors worshipped vegetation like the trees and they expected long life, prestige, power, luster, progeny, property, wealth, animals, luxury, knowledge and rational power from them.

They nourished Tulsi plant in the house and worshipped it as if the representative of entire vegetational world. Tulsi plant is not respected for its medicinal value to cure fever and cold, but it is being worshipped in every cultured family.

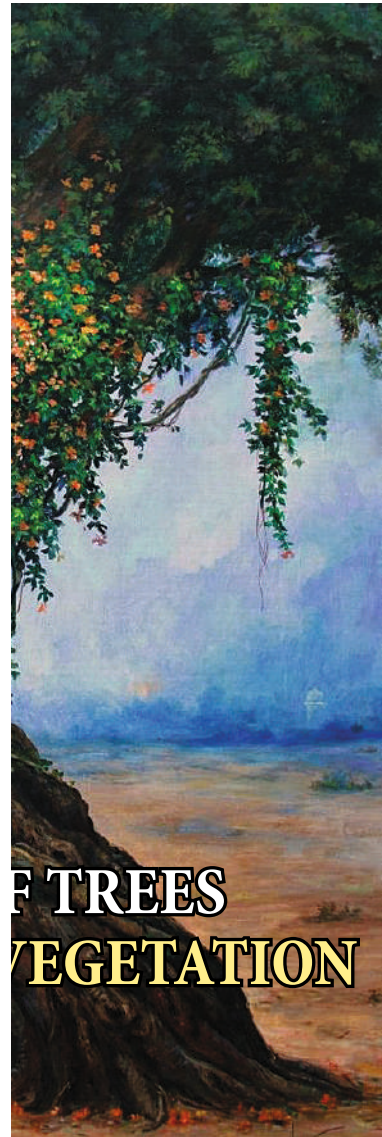
Tulsi has got a very proud position in process of worshipping gods and also it received an honourable title as dearest friend of God “Hari-priya”.

“O! Tulsi as you are very sacred and destroyer of sins, doner of spiritual merits respected by Narad and dear to Narayan, I bow down to you”.

Tulsi got an important place in the worship of Vishnu because it is very dear to God. The leaves of Bilva tree got importance in the worship of Shiva. Durva-grass is used in the worship of Ganesh. Our Rishis worshipped not only the trees but also attained oneness with the leaves of grass, they cultivated an ideal affection for vegetation and respected in their life.

Indian civilization teaches us to love the animate and inanimate world, and it expresses gratitude for all. It is necessary to identify its conscience. We should also develop same type of gentle conscience, Nandanvan can be created here only when we will extend and expand our affection to the animal and the vegetation world.

Shastri Swami Bhanuprakashdasji,
Porbandar





4 Paisa

What does 4 Paisa actually account to?

If the boy earns something, he will bring 4 paisa home.

To earn 4 paisa, man works hard day and night.

The question is,

Why in these sayings, specifically 4 paisa is used, neither 3 paisa nor 5?

Let's understand this better:

First paisa, throw it in the well.

With second paisa, clear all debts.

With third paisa, clear future debts.

Fourth paisa, keep it as future investment.

Let's understand this in depth:

1. First paisa, throw it in the well.

Meaning to utilize it in filling the stomach of one's family & children.

2. With second paisa, clear all debts.

Our parents brought us up, gave us good upbringing, to remove the debt that we owe to them.

3. Spend the third paisa for children's future.

To make our children study well and utilize it for their higher education.

(This is clearing our future debt.)

4. Fourth paisa, we must utilize it for doing virtuous deeds.

Meaning during time of happiness or sorrow, to utilize it for donation, in doing service of saints and to help the needy!

Thus, this is how it's addressed, 4 paisa...

How profound our ancient sayings are!



The true speech - Satyavrat

There was a sage called Satyavrat. It was his vow never to tell a lie. He was very truthful saint. He lived in his hermitage, in a pious atmosphere, adjoined by a green forest.

One day some butchers were found chasing a cow. The cow, running very fast, entered the rishi's ashram and its jungle nearby. The rishi saw that the cow, in order to save her life, had entered the thicket and gone deep inside.

In the meanwhile, those butchers came running to the sage. They knew Satyavratji and his vow. Hence they asked him, "Oh great rishi! Have you seen our cow which has just come running towards your Ashram?" The Rishi replied, "I have been sitting here for a pretty long time. No cow or horse has come to my Ashram." The butchers believed what the Rishi said and went away.

As a matter of fact, the sage Satyavrat did see the cow entering into the thicket, but he told a lie to save the cow.

Now think over the rishi's vow to speak the truth. His reply to the butcher's question was

quite untrue. So it was a breach of the rishi's vow. The rishi, always the speaker of the truth, became a liar for the time being. But if we think very minutely, we will realize that the rishi was right in lying. His lie saved the cow from the cruel hands of the slaughterers. The rishi proved himself to be a life-giver.

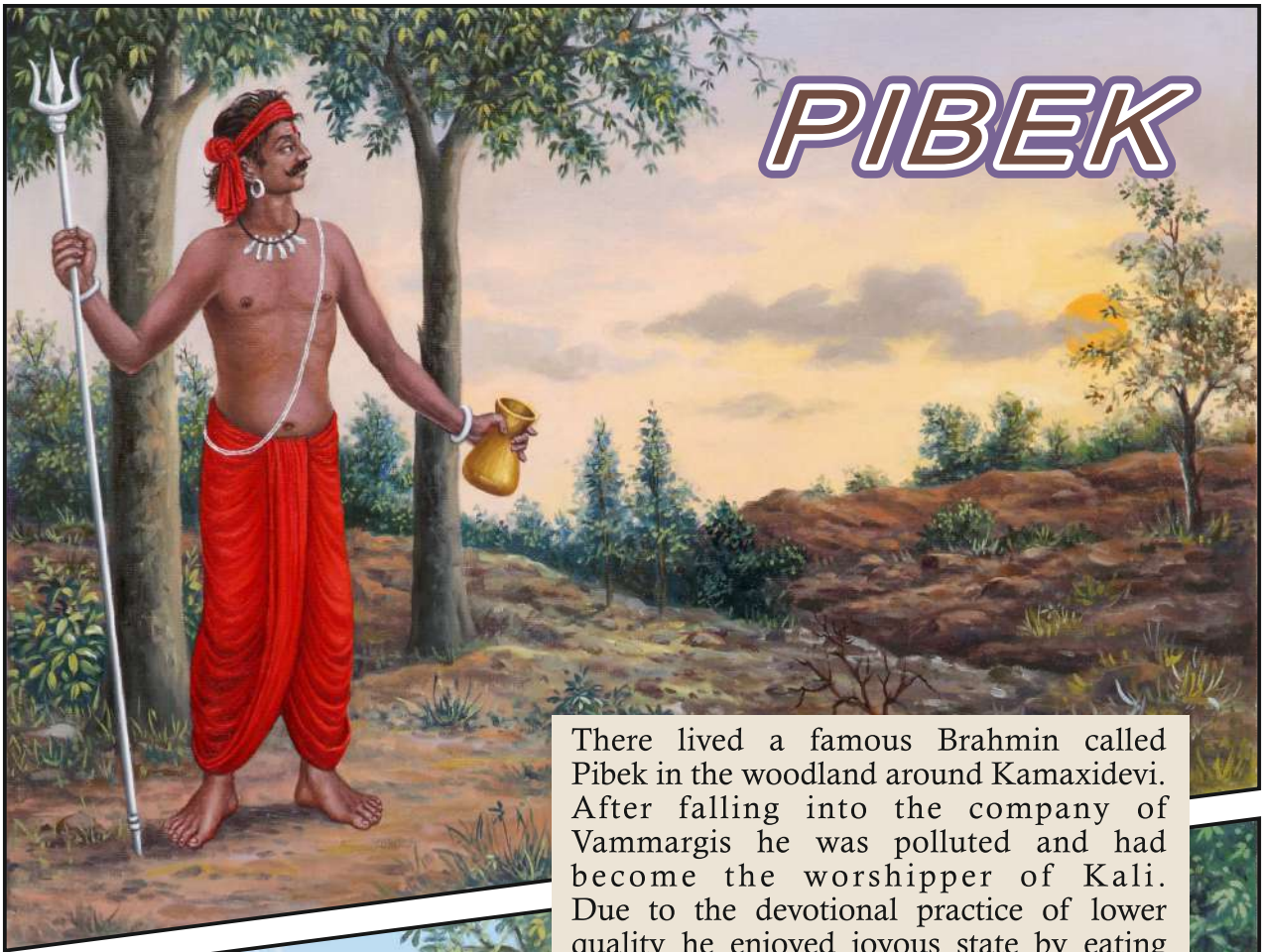
What is truth after all? Non-violence, peace are its complimentary aspects. If our truthful speech creates agitation, violence, restlessness, it is not the truth we are speaking.

Bhagawan Swaminarayan has enjoined His followers in the Shikshapatri – Verse – 26: "None shall ever speak the truth which is likely to cause fatal misery to oneself or to others...."

Yudhishtir, the truthful king also used to stick to his vow in the fatal battle of Mahabharat, but Dwarakadhish, Shri Krishna, advised him to review his vow in the given circumstance. Shri Krishna persuaded him to tell a lie, keeping in view the all-round interest of good people. Shri Krishna provoked Yudhishtir to speak loudly: "Ashwatthama is killed." Then Yudhishtir spoke gently in a low tone: "Maybe, a man or an elephant."

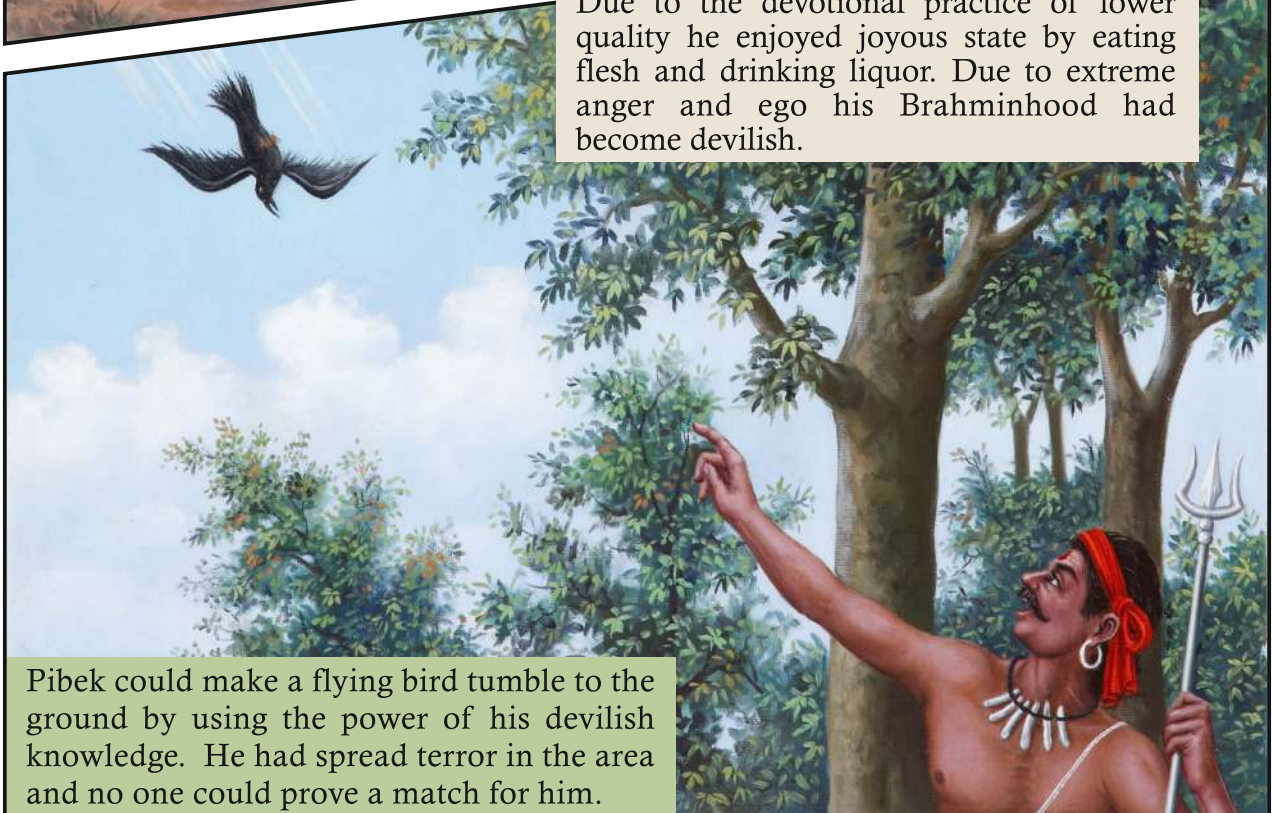
Yudhishtir spoke the truth but it was spoken confoundingly and therefore it was untrue. But after all Yudhishtir's lie was in the interest of the Pandavas, it was for the sake of the truth.

The speech that promotes happiness, peace, security, non-violence in life is called the true speech.

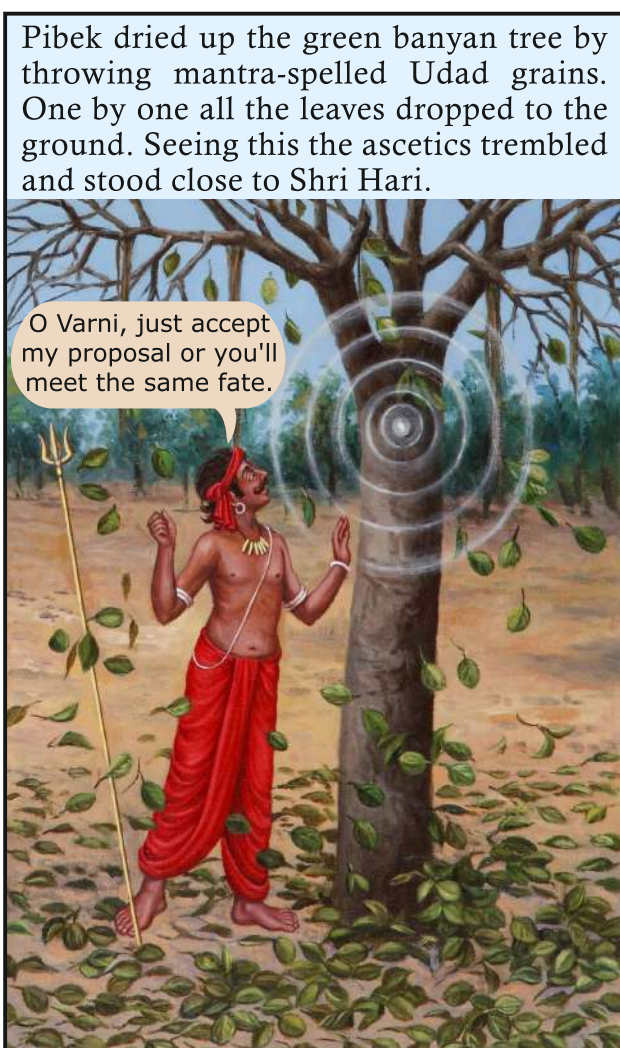
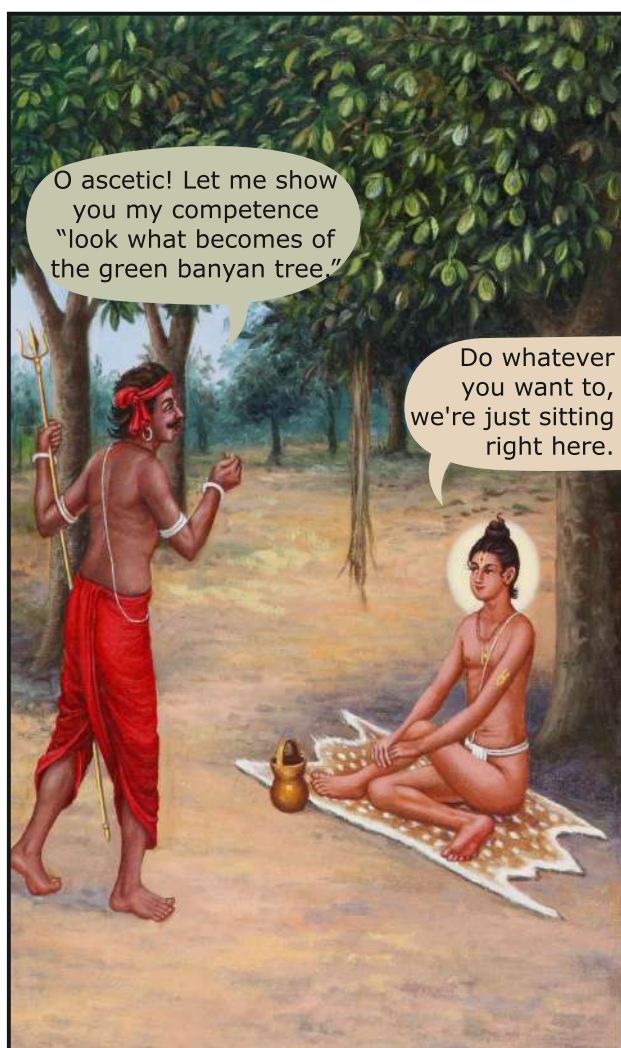
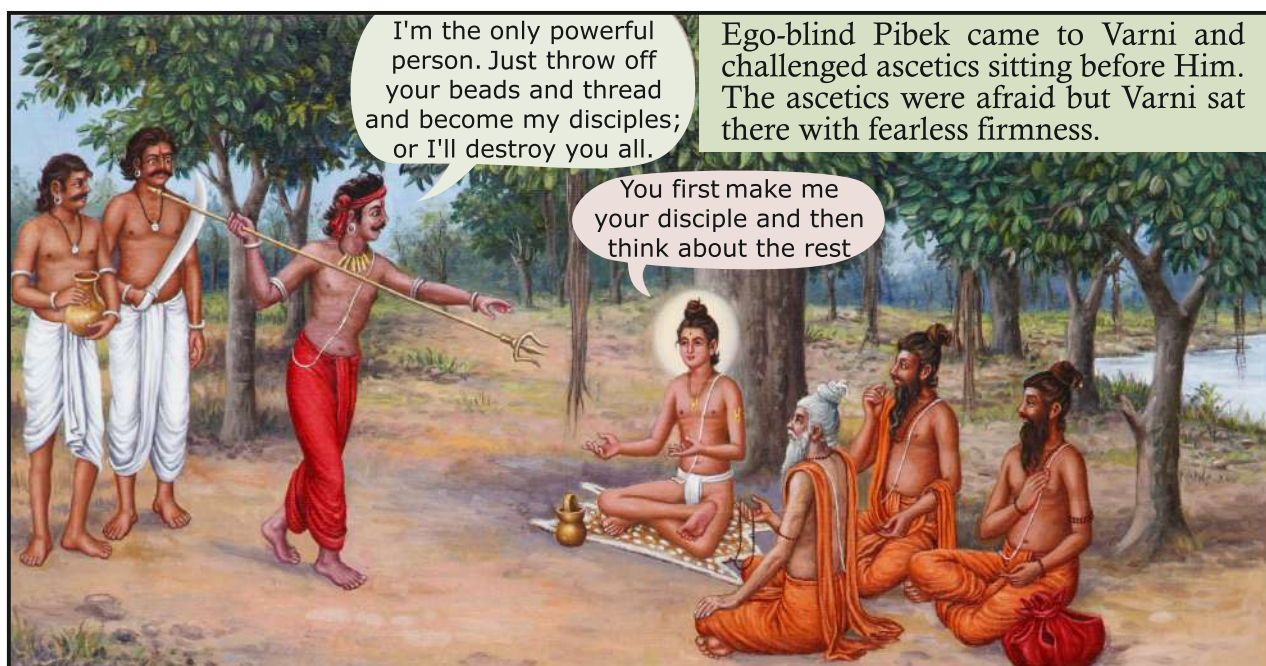


PIBEK

There lived a famous Brahmin called Pibek in the woodland around Kamaxidevi. After falling into the company of Vammargis he was polluted and had become the worshipper of Kali. Due to the devotional practice of lower quality he enjoyed joyous state by eating flesh and drinking liquor. Due to extreme anger and ego his Brahminhood had become devilish.



Pibek could make a flying bird tumble to the ground by using the power of his devilish knowledge. He had spread terror in the area and no one could prove a match for him.



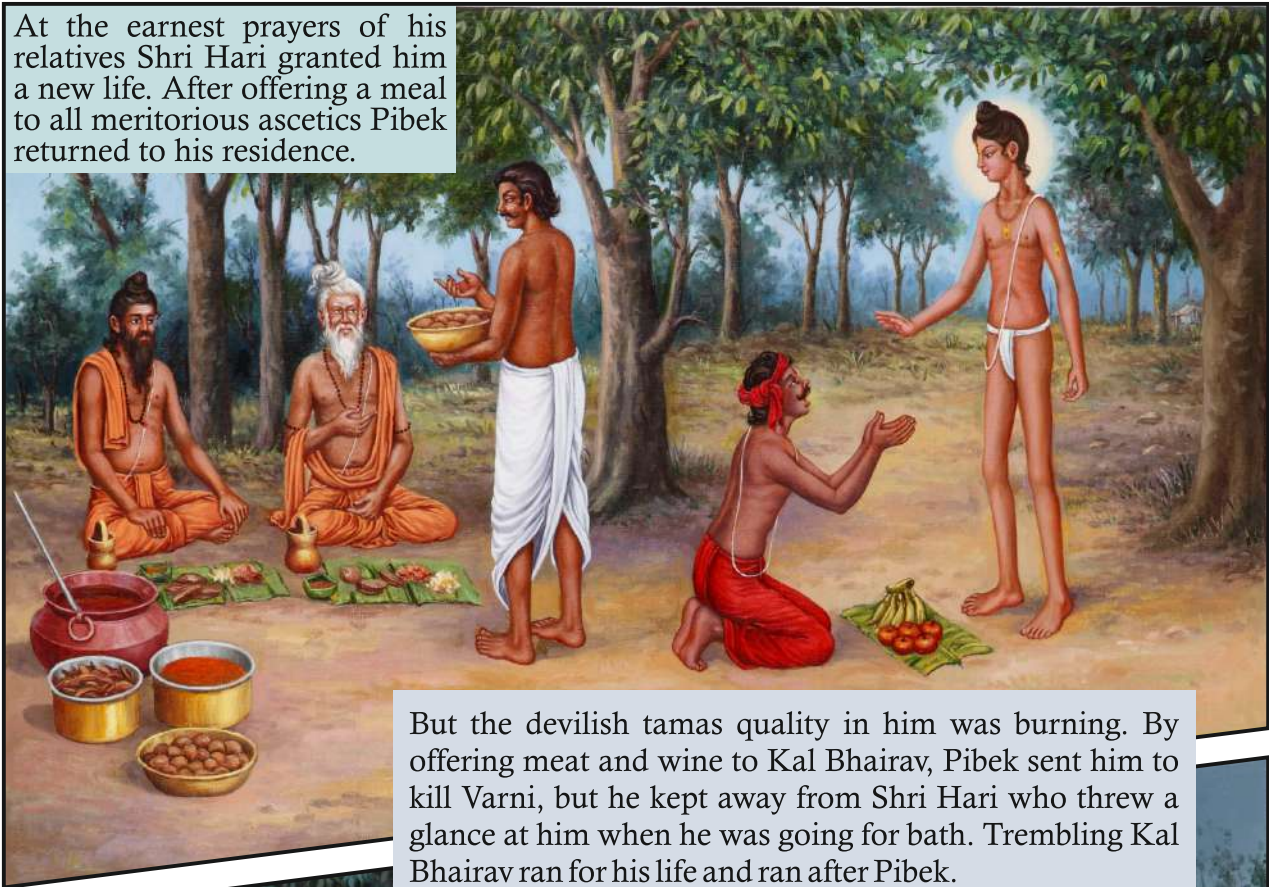
Then anger-gripped Pibek threw mantra-spelled Udad grains on Shri Hari but it had no effect on Him. So he called upon Vir-Bhairav to invoke him, who could not glance at Shri Hari who stood firm and Vir-Bhairav fell on Pibek who swooned and blood trickled from his mouth!



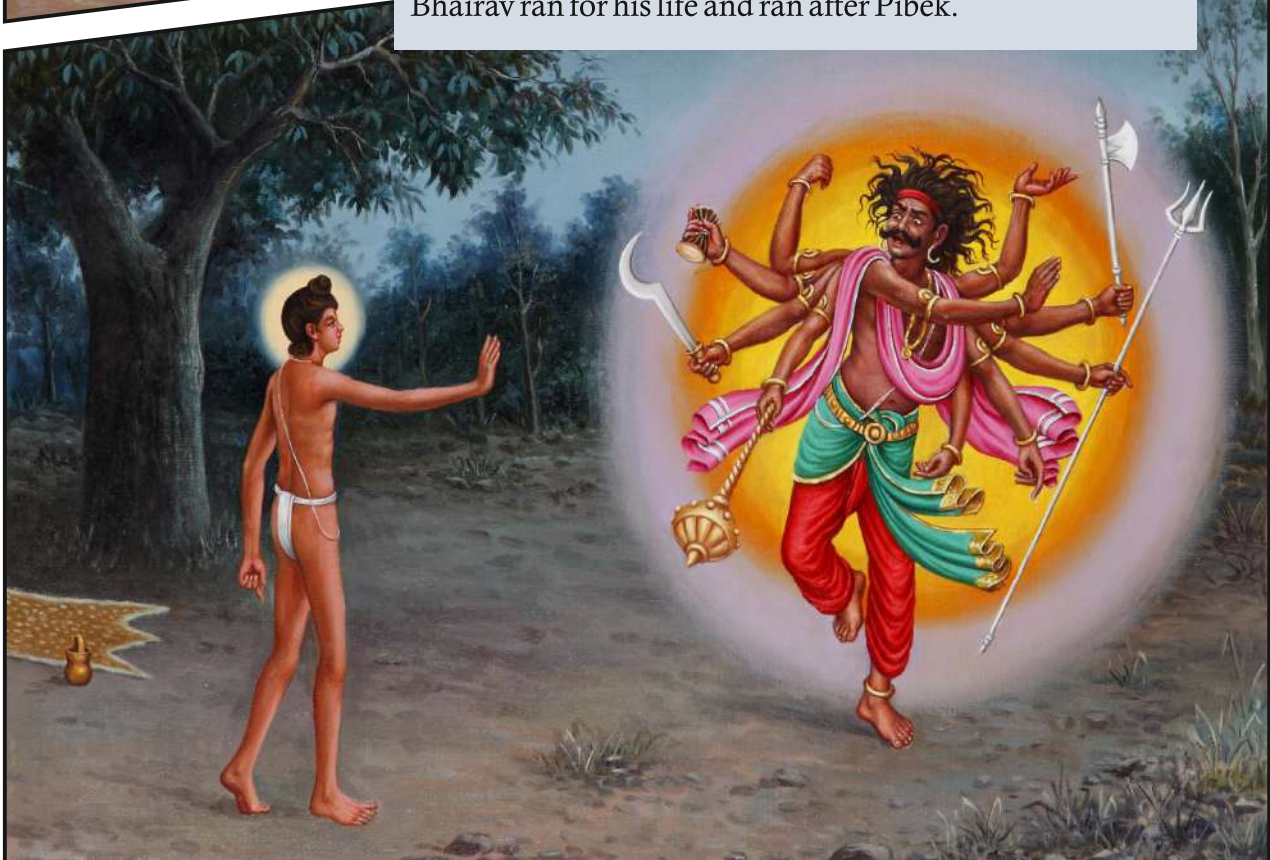
When he recovered after sometime he spoke "Wait O Celibate! Very soon I'm calling upon Batuk Bhairav, and he invoked Batuk Bhairav but being afraid of Shri Hari he caught hold of Pibek and tossed him up in the sky. After a while he sent Vir accompanied by Hanumanji, but Hanumanji put Pibek to the worst condition.

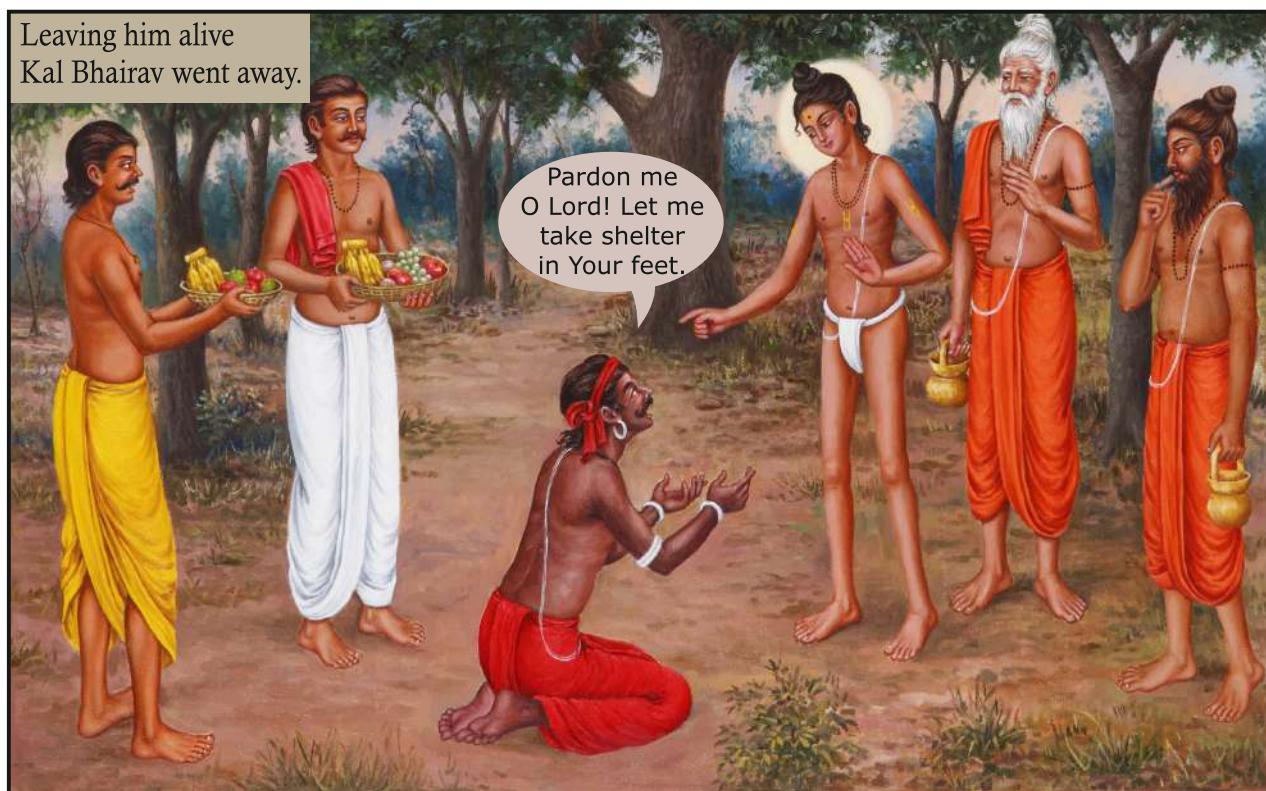


At the earnest prayers of his relatives Shri Hari granted him a new life. After offering a meal to all meritorious ascetics Pibek returned to his residence.



But the devilish tamas quality in him was burning. By offering meat and wine to Kal Bhairav, Pibek sent him to kill Varni, but he kept away from Shri Hari who threw a glance at him when he was going for bath. Trembling Kal Bhairav ran for his life and ran after Pibek.





The power of black-knowledge could not stand before Shri Hari. He took Pibek on the path of welfare, though he carried lower practices under the power of ghostly spirits. Pibek burnt all the scripture-volumes of Kaul branch and became the ward of Shri Hari!



HINDUISM

The
Root
of
Eternity

Tulsi

Holy Basil (*Ocimum Sanctum*)

The plant has delicate lavender colored flowers and its fruit consists of tiny rust colored nuts.

Tulsi is a potent herb that has been used in India for thousands of years mainly for divine protection and medicinal benefits.

It is a form of Basil and is also called the Holy Basil.

Holy basil is a sacred plant in Hindu belief. Hindus regard it as an earthly manifestation of the goddess Tulsi, a consort of the god Vishnu. The offering of its leaves is mandatory in ritualistic worship of Vishnu and his forms like Krishna and Vithoba.

A traditional prayer tells that the creator god Brahma resides in its branches, all Hindu pilgrimage centres reside in its roots, the Ganges flows through its roots, all deities in its stem and its leaves and the Hindu scriptures – the Vedas in the upper part of its branches.

While tree worship is not uncommon in Hinduism, the Tulsi plant is regarded the holiest of all plants. The Tulsi plant is regarded as a threshold point between heaven and earth. "The manifestation of god in the vegetable kingdom"

Tulsi has spiritual as well as medicinal significance in Ayurveda. Many Indian families keep a living Tulsi plant in their homes tending to it with great care and reverence.

Tulsi is also important because of its amazing medicinal properties.

According to Ayurveda, tulsi promotes purity and lightness in the body, cleansing the respiratory tract of toxins and relieving digestive gas and bloating.

1. Healing Power

The tulsi plant has many medicinal properties. The leaves are a nerve tonic and also sharpen memory.

2. Respiratory Disorder

The herb is useful in the treatment of respiratory system disorder. A decoction of the leaves, with honey and ginger is an effective remedy for bronchitis, asthma, influenza, fever, cough and common cold.

3. Sore Throat

Water boiled with basil leaves can be taken as drink in case of sore throat. It can also be used as a gargle.

4. Stress

Basil leaves are regarded as an 'adaptogen' or antistress agent. Even healthy persons can chew 12 leaves of basil, twice a day, to prevent stress. It purifies blood and helps prevent several common ailments.

The plant's woody stalks are often made into beads used in meditation malas or rosaries.

And for Mouth Infections, Insect Bites, Skin Disorders, Teeth health, Headaches, Eyes Disorders, Children's Ailments, Heart Disorders, Kidney Stones, and many more health problems.

For the benefit of all at the expense of none.

wisdom leaves **WHEN POWER ENTERS**

Sadguru Gopalanand Swami, during the Gayakwad rule, happened to stay in Vadodara. Those were the days when Vadodara was known as the city of Pundits. Hence Shriji Maharaj wished that Gopalanand Swami would stay in Vadodara in the interest of the Satsang. He was the most proper choice to convince all of the fact that Shriji Maharaj was none other than God Almighty Himself in the human form. Moreover Gopalanand Swami himself was very pious and enlightened saint. With the grace of Lord Swaminarayan he could perform miraculous deeds for the welfare of the Satsangis.

There was a poor boy called Mangal who used to come to the temple to render little services. Swamiji found him to be a good boy. He took pity on him and allowed him to put him at his association. Swamiji then managed for the expenses of his study. Mangal showed his zeal for higher education and worked hard. Swamiji inspired him to become clever student and motivated him to reach his goal without worrying about his fees, food, clothes and residential accommodation. Swamiji made all provision for his progress. Mangal was so lucky that he always got the Prasad – the food that was offered to God by Swamiji. By the grace of God and the blessing of Swamiji he grew into a very energetic brilliant young man. As fortune would have it, Sayajirao Gayakwad's eye fell on him.

Finding Mangal's I.Q. (intelligence quotient) very high, he was put to a test with some five questions. Mangal passed this test and was immediately appointed as the collector of the Amreli district. What a luck!

Then Gopalanand Swami had to move to another place, away from Vadodara. Mangalbhai the collector moved to Amreli. The post of the collector was considered very high and highly honoured in those days. So Mangalbhai received high respects from all. He used to go from his office by horse-carriage, escorted by horse-men riding before and after him. It used to be a great pomp! After all Mangalbhai was a great government officer, people saluted and honored him like anything.

Almost five years later, Gopalanand Swami returned to Vadodara. Mangalbhai received the news of his guru Gopalanand Swami's arrival to Vadodara. He decided to go there for guru's Darshan. He knew it well that it was by guru's grace that he could reach this high position. Other officials also wanted to have the Darshan of Swamiji. The retinue of some seven officials accompanying the collector came to Vadodara. When they reached the temple, they found Swamiji sitting in the verandah (porch) leaning against a pillar there. No sooner did Swamiji see Mangalbhai than affectionate words of welcome uttered from his heart: "Welcome, Mangal!" Swamiji addressed him as 'Mangal' because

that was the name by which Swamiji used to call him. Mangal was Swami's pet, fondly cared for. But on hearing Swamiji's words, the collector residing in his conscience, became uneasy and felt shy and started thinking: "Swamiji is indeed my guru but he has no discretion. In the presence of my officers, he bluntly addresses me as 'Mangal' which downs my reputation!" Thus the collector's thought, did the mere formality of bowing Swamiji. Then he restlessly left. Gopalanand Swami immediately understood the hidden meaning of his attitude.. He knew the secrets of Mangalbhai's heart easily. The collector was no more a person that he used to be, he was intoxicated with power and pelf. Swamiji rightly recognized him to be puffed up. When Mangalbhai left, Swamiji gave no utterance to his feelings. On the contrary, he prayed to Bhagawan Swaminarayan to bless the collector.

But alas! A week later a stunning news came that Sayajirao had summoned Mangalbhai to appear before him at Vadodara and was dismissed from service for some fault committed by him.

Mangalbhai went back to home, without high position. Then there were no horse-carriages, no servants, nobody to salute and honour him. He was then on the road, on foot like all other common men. On seeing him on foot, people would then pass comments: "There goes that Mangaliya! With what a pomp he used to go by horse-carriage! Now alone on the road, on foot!"

"Wisdom leaves when power enters."

Prof. Gordhanbhai Patel, Bharuch

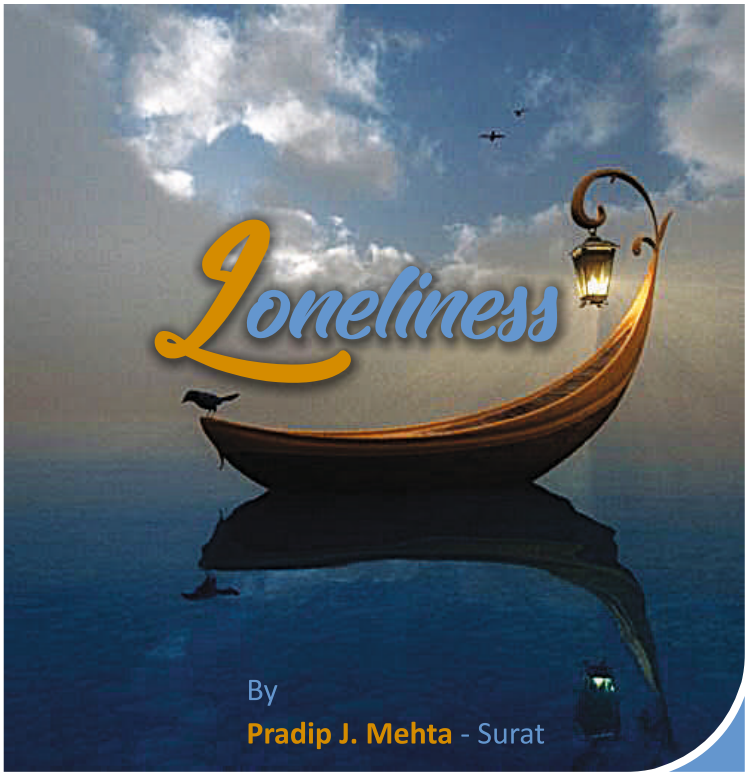
A man just got married and was returning home with his wife. They were crossing a lake in a boat when suddenly a great storm arose. The man was a warrior and a person with very strong will-power, but the woman became very much afraid because it seemed almost hopeless.

The boat was small and the storm was really huge and any moment they were going to be drowned. But the man sat silently calm and quiet, as if nothing was happening. The woman was trembling and she said, "Are you not afraid?" This may be our last moment of life! It doesn't seem that we will be able to reach the other shore.

The man laughed and took the sword out of its sheath, then he brought the naked sword very close to the woman's neck and asked, "Are you afraid?" She said, "If the sword is in your hands, why I should be afraid? You are my husband, and I know you will never ever hurt me, because I know that you love me." He put the sword back and said, "This is my answer. I know God loves me, and the storm is in His hands. So whatever is going to happen is going to be good. If we survive, good; if we don't survive, good, because everything is in His hands, and He cannot do anything wrong to us."

Moral: Develop Trust.

This is the trust which one needs to imbibe and which is capable of transforming your whole life. Any less won't do!



Loneliness

By
Pradip J. Mehta - Surat

There is nothing like loneliness; as the word suggests. No human can ever feel lonely till he breathes, eyes could see and mind is mindful. Loneliness is a mental condition. Loneliness has nothing to do with physical involvement, as every and any feeling is mentally born and loneliness is not exception. Loneliness is a mental illusion, which is a figment of imagination. It is not a reality. One does not become lonely because of circumstances or for the lack of company of friends or family or other associations.

You are never alone till your mind is working. Mind is ever working, thinking and in the full control of the activities of the physical body. Mind being a storage of past, present and future events to happen. There could not be a question of any loneliness or solitude as you can open any chapter happened in past or happening in present or likely to happen in future or contemplate to make such event or chapter, which could help you to pull-out from the loneliness felt.

Loneliness is never silent, it is more eloquent, expressive and productive. When you are alone and away from the company and

crowd, your mind is more concentrated and focused; hence it exploits the creative character and becomes more innovative. Thoughts continue to rush on the subject under contemplation as you are alone and protected by the solitude. Loneliness helps to the chain of continuity of thoughts and more than that it filters the process of thinking, which helps to the logical perfection of derivations.

Never before, now and in future that a human being could be lonely as every human being has an inner self which is real and the other one is physical outer self. So everybody is conjoined with the real inner self and that never allows you to be lonely. The inner self/person keeps you alive; but unfortunately rare are those who realize the real person in our outer physical body and take the physical body as real person. The inner self is the real self. None of our actions or thoughts could escape from its notice. All acts and thoughts are evaluated, watched and scrutinized as to whether they are honest, genuine, righteous or corrupt, cruel, villainous or wicked. Thus inner master is always present till last breath is inhaled, so you are never lonely.

Loneliness could be physical and mental. Physical loneliness eventuate or crop-up when you are missing friends and family members' associations. Physical loneliness could be a cause of the mental loneliness. Mental loneliness can result if your sentiments are not properly responded or totally not responded. Human mind is a storage of various kinds of sentiments. Human mind is very emotional and hypersensitive too. So if its sentiments are not responded, the person starts feeling ignored and overlooked and that will make him feel lonely and neglected.

We are earthen idols as it is said. Our outer body has no life. It is like cloths covering the real self inside.

Sahjanand Swami's Swaminarayanism

A new approach to understand the message of Bhagwan Shree Sahjanand Swami

Part - 4

Loj : Ascetics correspondence

Nilkanth Varni wrote perhaps the first letter of his life at Loj on the fifth of Falgun Vad, Vikram Samvat 1856. He addressed this letter to Ramanand Swami. Muktanand Swami, along with his letter, sent the letter of Nilkanth Varni to Ramanand Swami at Bhuj with Mayaram Bhatt.

The content of Nilkanth Varni's letter provides many points of his India pilgrimage.

I have come to this part of the country after finishing my pilgrimage in all the great centres with the will of God.

Here I heard that a Jivanmukta has manifested himself.

Besides when I was learning Yoga from Gopal Yogi living with him in a forest, and when I attained mastery over Ashtang Yoga, he told me that I would find a siddha in the shadow of Mount Girnar.

After that I passed many a day living only on air, but I could not see the Krishna Incarnate.

Now I have stayed here knowing this to be holy land.

Hearing from Swami Muktanand whom I look upon as a holy man and therefore as one who would tell the truth, that you give a vision of Krishna in Dharana.

I am eager to see you as a chakor is to see the moon, and so kindly come back soon, otherwise I shall come there.

Muktanand Swami's letter provides hints of

Nilkanth Varni's personality :

A Brahmchari in the dress of a Khakhi has come here in search of you travelling all over the country in the East of Hindustan.

On seeing him our mind has found peace; such is his appearance and manner.

He is quite young but highly proficient in Yoga.

He asks questions which we are not able to answer properly; such is his power.

This Yogi has yellow hair on his head, a big Tulsi bead round his neck, a girdle round his waist, a deerskin, a rosary, a kerchief, a piece of cloth for filtering water and a small MS.

He does not take any solid food and so all the veins in his body look green in colour ; nor does there seem to be any blood in his body, and if a woman's shadow approaches him he vomits.

He has too many great and noble qualities to be mentioned...

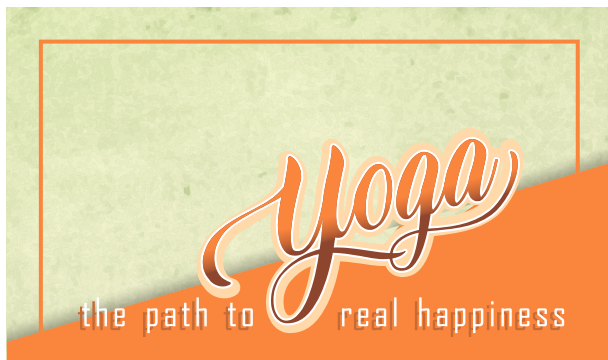
Ramanand Swami gave a very characteristic reply to Nilkanth Varni. He wrote to him that if he was desirous of attaining salvation he should stay on even if it was necessary for him to be bound to a pillar for that purpose and that he should obey Swami Muktanand in his absence.

When Nilkanth Varni read the reply of Ramanand Swami, he got up and embraced a pillar, leaving it only when Muktanand Swami asked him to do so.

Afterwards he became patient and followed Muktanand Swami in every thing.

(Contd.)

Prof. Harendra P. Bhatt



1. What Yoga Really Is ?

Once Shatanand Muni asked Shree Hari : O Lord, I would like to learn Yoga with all constituents including Yama (restrictions) thoroughly from You as You are omniscient and worthy to be served by Yogis. Though, I have been successful in attaining Samadhi (superconscious state) through Your favour, I want to learn about the precedent spiritual practises which constitute Yoga and all their characteristics as described in Yoga texts, together with critical commentaries.

Shree Hari said :

O saintly sage, You have the best intellect and intelligence and that is why You are curious to learn about the true essence of Yoga. In this world there is no other practice for realizing the desired objective. Only Yoga can lead to the ultimate good.

Even for the saints the control of mind is very difficult. But for Yoga, such mental control cannot be attained. While practising Yoga, the practise for enlightenment and devotion becomes successful. So the nature of Yoga should be certainly learnt.

The science of Yoga was at first spread by Hiranya Garbha Muni (i.e. Brahma). Then Patanjali, the incarnation of the great cosmic serpent – Shesha Naga presented it systematically in the form of aphorisms. Accepting the essence of these aphorisms I narrate to you all the constituents of Yoga. All the constituents of Yoga are parts of Samadhi

in fact. Samadhi is said to be complete absorption of the mind in God Supreme - Lord Krishna (i.e. God). Now learn about the characteristics of the constituents of Yoga.

When metal ore is heated in the fire, all the impurities of a metal are destroyed. Similarly, by Samadhi Yoga all the impurities of the mind are destroyed. Therefore, the devoted aspirant should at once be enthusiastic and start the practice of Yoga for destroying all such impurities for attaining Samadhi for merging the mind into the Master of the Goddess Lakshmi (i.e. God).

The aspirant who desires success in all constituency of Yoga and Samadhi, should submit himself with devotion to the spiritual teacher who is the ocean of all arts of Yoga.

The aspirant should always serve him according to his linking. He should please him and practise Yoga in the way he says.

The aspirant of Yoga should live at a holy (unpolluted) place on the levelled land, free from pebbles and sand. The place must be pleasing to his mind and free from obstacles.

He should live at a place which is convenient for one who serves him with food and other provisions. He should live in a place where obstacles are not caused by cold, wind and insect-bites.

The devoted aspirant should live care-free in such a hermitage and practise Yoga. There he should have the convenience of a lake (or a river) fit for him.

(Contd.)

Shantikumar Bhatt
Vadodara



The meaning of life

A man died...

When he realized it, he saw God coming closer with a suitcase in his hand.

Dialogue between God and Dead Man:

God : Alright son, it's time to go.

Man : So soon? I had a lot of plans...

God : I am sorry but, it's time to go.

Man : What do you have in that suitcase?

God : Your belongings.

Man : My belongings? You mean my things...
Clothes... money...

God : Those things were never yours, they
belong to the Earth.

Man : Is it my memories?

God : No. They belong to Time.

Man : Is it my talent?

God : No. They belong to Circumstance.

Man : Is it my friends and family?

God : No son. They belong to the Path you
travelled.

Man : Is it my wife and children?

God : No. they belong to your Heart.

Man : Then it must be my
body?

God : No, No... It belongs to
Dust.

Man : Then surely it must be
my Soul!

God : You are sadly mistaken
son. Your Soul belongs to
me.

Man, with tears in his eyes and
full of fear, took the suitcase
from God's hand and opened
it...

Empty...

Heartbroken and tears falling
down his cheeks, he asks God...

Man : I never owned anything?

God : That's right. You never
owned anything.

Man : Then? What was mine?

God : Your MOMENTS.

Every moment you lived was
yours.

Do Good in every moment

Think Good in every moment

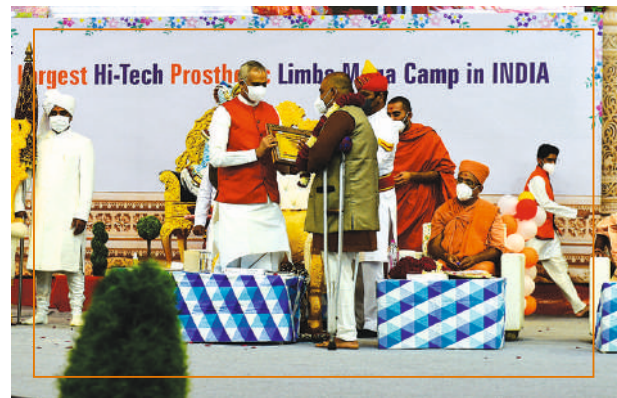
Thank God for every moment

Life is just a Moment.

Live it...

Love it...

Enjoy it...



PROUD MOMENT FOR SWAMINARAYAN SAMPRADAY!

Vadtal temple where 710 disabled people were made capable to lead a normal life! It's indeed the best service to humanity! Swaminarayan Sampraday has always taken lead to serve the society in all the spheres of human needs - either it may be natural disasters, education, medical, food distribution to needy or moral and social upliftment.

It is a wonderful world record! Golden glory for Swaminarayan Sansthan Vadtal. With the grace of Lord Swaminarayan and blessings of **H. H. Acharya Shri Rakeshprasadji Maharaj, Sukhdev Swami** (Gokuldharm - Nar) had arranged High-tech Prosthetic Limbs Donation Mega Camp at Vadtal temple; where 114 hands and 596 legs were provided. Thus, 710 people were benefitted in this Mega Camp.

This humble initiative was successfully organised with the help of Vadtal Temple Board and the august presence of **H. H. Acharya Shri Rakeshprasadji Maharaj, Rajyapal Shri Dev Vratji** and the leading saints of Vadtal temple.





Vadtal temple where 710 disabled people were made capable to lead a normal life!



Prasadi

*Wonder venture **at** Meen Lake*

This is the same lake where Lord Swaminarayan had taken bath along with the saintly group. Being influenced by the glance of Shri Hari, the water animals like fish, turtle and crabs entered Samadhi and began to flutter on the surface looked as if they were lifeless! All who were present there plunged into amazement and wandered, "Have all these creatures lost life!" And thinking like this all of them came out. Then Shriji Maharaj removed their surprise by telling, "All of them have entered Samadhi." As He spoke these words and threw His glance on the lifeless looking creatures, as a surprise of all surprises; all the lifeless looking creatures began to flutter and in a moment all of them started swimming happily.

As it has been blessed by Lord Swaminarayan, this lake exists at Sardhar as a silent witness of the divine venture of Shri Hari which was powered by His spiritual competence!