

॥ श्री स्वामिनारायणो विजयतेतराम् ॥



bal shibir at **VADTAL**dham



sahajANAND

The Eternal Bliss

July-2023 | No. 23



CONTENT

INSPIRATION

H. H. Acharya Shri
Rakesh Prasadji Maharaj
Vadtal Diocese

SAHAJ ANAND

A quarterly published
Periodical

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

India Rs. : 150/-
Abroad Rs. : 600/-

OWNER

Vadtal Temple
Managing Trustee Board,
Vadtal

MANAGING EDITOR

Shastri Swami
Dr. Santvallabhdasji

EDITORS

Parshad Shri Lalji Bhagat
Shri Harendra P. Bhatt

DESIGN & CONCEPT

Hari Smruti
Ravi K. Barot
Jnan Baug, Vadtal

Prelude	1
H. H. Acharya Shri Rakeshprasadji Maharaj	
Negative & Positive	3
Pradeep J. Mehta	
King Bharat	4
Prof. Gordhanbhai Patel	
Parcha	6
Prof. Madhusudan Vyas	
Ramnam Satya	7
Tulsi Vakil	
Ras Darshan	8
Lalji Bhagat	
Hinduizm	10
Inspiration	11
Amavasya	12
Shastri Swami Bhanuprakashdasji	
Sadhuta	13
Shikshapatri	14
Lalji Bhagat	
Adhyatma	16
Shastri Swami Bhanu Prakashdasji	
Health & Spirituality	18
Dr. Dhanwantarikumar H. Jha	
God - The Ultimate Philanthropist	19
Parshottambhai KachaJigar Soni	
Yoga	20
Shantikumar Bhatt	
Happiness	22
Pradip Jaywadan Mehta	
Motivation	23
Lesson of Life	24

Published by

Shri Swaminarayan Temple

Vadtal Sansthan



Ta. Nadiad, Dist. Kheda, Gujarat,
INDIA - 387 375.



+91 268 - 2589728, 776



vadtaldhamvikas@gmail.com



www.vadtalmandir.org

PRELUDE



H. H. Acharya

Shri
Rakeshprasadji
Maharaj

Satsang is like Kalp Vriksh, the celestial tree. Lord Shri Hari had established Satsang out of extreme compassion. This Satsang is related with the feeling of dedication and sincerity remains at its center. Firm conviction (Nischay) about Godhood should be cultivated with innocence, open heartedness, simplicity, courtesy and profound understanding. Shriji Maharaj used to give example of neem tree. Your conviction should be rock-like and unshakable like neem tree. If you have been convinced about the form and nature of neem tree so much that, even if deities like Brahma will not be able to shake your conviction. Lord Shri Hari get pleased with the person who has such firm Nischay.

Since long time we have been in Satsang along with our family and friends and offer different types of ritualistic services in Satsang. We offer worship and go to temple and follow the codes of conduct of our Holy Fellowship. We also study holy scriptures. As a result of all these activities, the qualities of innocence, selflessness and truthfulness should be cultivated in our personality. Many undesirable events may take place in our life but, our Nischay should not be shaken.

During the period of the material life span on this Earth, Shriji Maharaj delivered the nectar-like speeches, and got the saints to write the sacred volumes like

Bhaktachintamani and Satsangi Jeevan and wrote Shikshapatri by His own Hand. At present when this activity has increased at the global level, the core principles of the Sampraday and the essence of the preaching of Shriji Maharaj should be nourished in today's youth children, so that their Nischay in Satsang becomes firm and unshakable in view of different examples.

Shriji Maharaj used to say, 'If a self-willed behaves by his own will, he will create many troubles so a man should not behave in an erroneous way' and how is the basic nature of human beings? Man believes himself as knowledgeable and behaves as per his will.' Satsang is like an ocean and he may act in life by taking only one element from that ocean. In this way Shriji Maharaj has forbidden all His followers from behaving in a reckless way and the Shikshapatri written by Him always brings desired fruit to the ward who follows it thoroughly.

All the devotees should behave as per the codes of conduct stated in the Shikshapatri and they should have strong faith in different forms of God. If we make firm conviction that Shriji Maharaj has established His form as Harikrishna Maharaj at Vadtal and that Harikrishna Maharaj is our Chief beloved God, He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world and the cause of all causes and He is worthy to be worshipped by all with absolute devotion.

It is essential that you get such firm conviction in the form of God. Many joys and sorrows may come in your life due to the fruit of past actions of your



past births but by the power of conviction, you happen to get divine knowledge in Satsang and in that situation man does not bother about difficulty, pain or disease. Once you get firm conviction, you will begin to think that God's will is my fate. When you have surrendered your body, mind and wealth to God, in that situation God's will becomes your fortune.

Shriji Maharaj told again and again, 'One who behaves in Satsang with deceit-free emotion can cross the ocean of Maya.' No deception can work before God and has never succeeded before Him. Many people can be redeemed by Satsang but a deceit can never be redeemed. So in order to please God you should practice Satsang by mind, speech and action because this Satsang and human body do not become available again and again. So offer your devotion to God by sincere faith and have firm Nischay for God. Never try to put anybody to shame by your cross argument. Shriji Maharaj says, 'One who tries to put anybody to shame is like a black demon.' So you should stay in Satsang by being pride less. God showers His grace on such devotees who offer devotion by being innocent and prideless.

The second most important thing is that, we study the main scriptures like Shikshapatri, Bhaktachintamani, Shrimad Satsangi Jeevan, Vachnamrutam, Muktanand Kavya, Brahmanand Kavya, Nishkulanand Kavya, the kirtans of Nand Saints, Harililamrutam; we can get a good touch of sacred knowledge. Shriji Maharaj in Shri Hari Charitramrut Sagar says, 'My wards should always invariably study, ponder and contemplate on the contents of holy scriptures. Why so? The reason is that one who does not learn or study, the ghost called mind does not allow the thinking process to get peace. So you should learn, study and ponder on the scriptures and that is the most essential thing.'

The main condition for the welfare of the soul is that all the Satsangis should behave as per the imperatives of Shriji Maharaj and this should be our main aim in life. Our Nand Saints

have written the scriptures by holding God in their heart. Our Satsangi should nourish Satsang by means of those Kirtans and scriptures because God performed many sports after manifesting Himself on the Earth. It is our sincere attempt that in this computer age of science and technology, our fundamental literature should enter the conscience of the new generation. So, our English quarterly Sahajanand is being published with that point of view. So we appeal all the devotees to avail highest benefit of the same.

The articles published in this magazine are of best quality because these articles are written by scholars and knowledgeable persons with profound devotion and understanding of the principles of Sampraday. So I advise you to study those articles regularly. Finally, I wish that Harikrishna Maharaj, the resident of Vadtal may do the welfare of all, and may your affection be always attached with the form of Shriji Maharaj and may all the devotees behave in Satsang like an ideal devotee and that is my earnest prayer at the lotus feet of Shri Hari.

Epigram

॥ पुण्यकृतां ॥

शकुनानामिवाकाशे
मत्स्यानामिव चोदके ।
पदं तथा न दृश्येत
तथा पुण्यकृतां गतिः ॥

As no one can mark the track of birds in the sky or of fishes in the water, likewise the track of an enlightened person cannot be seen by anyone.

The picture depicts two types of characters ; negative and positive. The negative thinking man does not want to start with the work as he thinks that he will not be able to do the work to achieve the goal. But the positive thinking man would start thinking that how to do it and start trying to do it and feel that it could be done. This positive attitude and approach could make man successful in achieving determined goal on which he is working. So when you become firm and resolute the positive energy starts emerging and helps you to achieve your goal. So unless you start your journey with the positive set of



mind towards the set goal you should not and cannot say that the goal is beyond reach. Before starting the efforts to reach the set goal there should not be negative thoughts about reaching that goal as it can impair your efforts. Treat the goal as a mission of life. The reason most people do not reach their goal is that they do not define it or ever consider it as achievable. Goals make you focus on your energy in a positive direction. To set goal is absolutely necessary as it gives meaning to life. Man cannot live without setting purpose of life. Man without a purpose or goal in life is like a scrap drifting in the air without directions and a ship without a sail. Be positive in setting and achieving the goal of life . Always think that you can do it. If you want to hit the mark you must aim a little above it because every arrow shot in the air is always subjected to the law of gravitation. Mind is a fire simply it requires to be ignited.

mind towards the set goal you should not and cannot say that the goal is beyond reach. Before starting the efforts to reach the set goal there should not be negative thoughts about reaching

negative & POSITIVE

Advocate

Pradeep J. Mehta

Our country, Bharat, is named after its great King Bharat who was the eldest son of Bhagawan Rishabh Dev. King Bharat, when he came of age, undertook the responsibility of the state's administration at the behest of his father. He married Panchajani, the daughter of King Vishwarup. Five sons were born to them, all of them were very religious and scholars of the shastras. They led a very pious life based on good conduct.

King Bharat worshipped God by doing yajnas (ceremonial performances of sacrifice) with great faith and devotion. This purified his heart from which arose a pure, unselfish and absolute devotion to God. The more his devotion increased, the more he became detached from worldly things. He became quite indifferent to his state, its administration, his Kith and Kin and every worldly thing, so much so that he entrusted the whole state's administration to his sons. Then, renouncing his palace and the state he resorted to the Pulahashram in the Himalayas. There he began the life of a hermit, solely devoted to worshipping God. The river Gandaki was near the Pulahashram. This river has a lot of small round stones which are worshipped as



the idols of Lord Vishnu. Bharatji used to bathe in this river and then gather flowers, tulsi-leaves, water fruit, roots etc. for offering to God. This was his morning routine.

One day, as usual, Bharatji took a bath in the river, offered his daily prayers to God and then was chanting the mantra 'Om'. He was sitting on the bank of the river for hours, chanting the mantra. At that time an event happened. A doe (a female deer) strayed from its group came to the river bank to drink water. As she started drinking water then a lion's roaring was heard from behind. She was frightened like anything. She was pregnant and to save her life, she jumped into the river to cross the current. But unfortunately while jumping her embryo (fetus) slipped out of the womb. This embryo - new born baby of the doe began to flow with the current of the river. The doe, unfortunately died owing to the sudden fright from the lion and the fatal jump which caused the acute pain of the untimely delivery.

Bharatji saw this tragic event. His soft and loving heart was filled with pity for the new born cub of the doe flowing towards him. He stretched his hands and picked up that cub to save its life. Merciful Bharatji took that new

born deer to his ashram and began to take utmost care. Everyday Bharatji busied himself with feeding, watering, protecting that cub with great zeal. This too much care created, too much attachment and affection for the cub. As time went by, the small deer began to grow up to be healthier and stunter than ever. Bhartji did not allow it to go out among other crowds of deers. He was constantly worried about it, lest it should run astray and be killed by cruel animals.

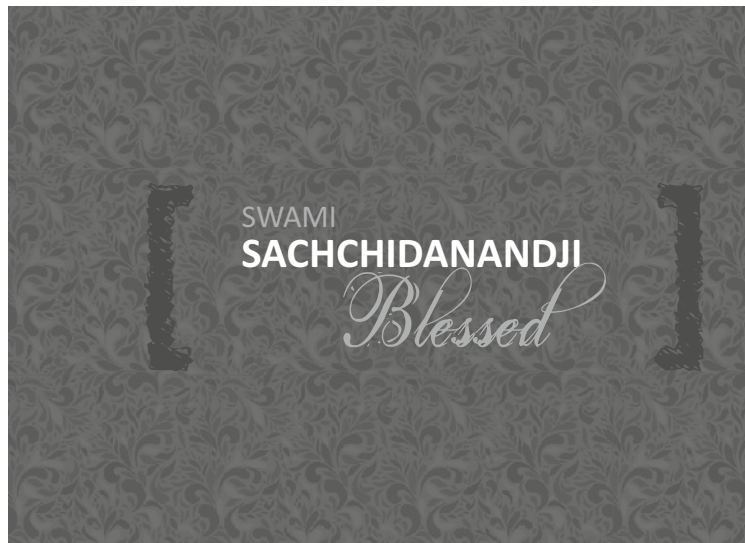
Look! Renouncing everything, Bharatji had gone to Pulahashram to worship God. Instead, he engrossed in worshipping a deer. Thus, constantly worrying about that deer, he at last left his corporeal body. At the time of his last breath, he was still thinking of the deer. As a result he was reborn in the animal species; he became a deer. But, fortunately he retained a clear memory of his former birth because he had done austere tapas and worship. That is why this time, attaining the life of a deer, he acted cautiously. Instead of moving among the crowds of deers, he took shelter at the Pulahashram and lived there all alone. When he felt that his death was just near, he took a last bath in the river Gandaki. He intensely wished to be born again as a human being. His wish was fulfilled by God. He was born in a Brahmin family. Then he seriously thought he had wasted his life twice because of worldly attachment. So he strongly decided not to repeat his mistake. He began to live quite detached from all men and things. Nor did he allow others to take interest in him. For this he acted of his own accord, as a mad man. It was a willful madness. He was called Jad Bharat.

Once Rahugan, the King of Sindhu Sauwir

region was going to Kapil Muni's ashram with a desire to acquire spiritual knowledge from the rishi. He was sitting in a palanquin carried by four bearers. On the bank of the river Ikshumati, while resting for a while, one of the four palanquin bearers was found missing. The King ordered his three palanquin bearers to find out anyone as the fourth one. At that time, Bharatji was found loitering there. He was caught hold of and was brought to yoke to this service. But, on the way while walking Bharatji began to often jump and stride rapidly to save small living insects on the earth. Bharatji's sudden jumps affected the palanquin and consequently the King himself, whose head often dashed against the railing of the palanquin. He got annoyed and rebuked the new and strange bearer. Bharatji seemingly mad as he was, unfolded his own history of the former life, summing up that his attachment to a deer had led him astray from the path of salvation. King Rahugan's arrogance was shaken off on hearing Bharatji's story. He was enlightened to tread the path of salvation.

Shriji Maharaj refers to this story of Bharatji in the Vachnamrut - 17 of the Gadhada Last chapters. Shriji calls it very miraculous. It is an eye opener for a devotee of God. Shri Hari says that there are innumerable kinds of sin, but for a devotee, it is a very great sin if he has any attachment for things other than God. Bharatji had to incarnate as a deer because of his attachment for it. But then realizing his mistake, in the next birth, he behaved like a mad man detached from everything in the world except God.

- Gordhanbhai Bharuch.



GIRLS BLESSED BY GOD

Once, when Shri Hari was halting in Kariyani, three girls of tender age set out to get the darshan of God. The three of them set out on the way to Kariyani without taking any male member to escort and to protect them.

They travelled through a barren area which was full of thorny bushes. The path was zigzag, bumpy and full of sharp, pointed stones. They did not carry a water bag, bottle or water pot with them. Their throat had dried due to thirst, but how could they quench their thirst?

The travel for Darshan proved a severe trial for them. They suffered a lot due to thirst and hunger during their uncomfortable traveling. The pain was so severe that it became almost impossible for them to survive. There was no means available for them to subsist.

As if due to telepathy or due to divine power Shri Hari got the signal about the suffering of young female devotees. He at

once presented before them the means to survive.

Oh! As surprise of all surprises and as a wonder of wonders he appeared there in different (changed) form. He offered the girls a pitcher full of cold water. All the three girls drank cold water, quenched the thirst and felt sated. Shri Hari who was inognito bowed, touched their feet and slowly picked up the thorns which had pierced into their foot soles.

God himself appeared there by changing his form and appearance. He gave sweet balls to the hungry girls to eat. When the girls had eaten the sweet balls and drunk cold water, when all the pricking thorns were pulled out from their foot soles, Shri Hari asked them to proceed towards Kariyani village. He also informed them that they will get the darshan of Swami Sahajanand who was halting in Kariyani.

“Since you are of tender age we have preferred to accompany you on your way to Kariyani. Now you may proceed without having any fear in the mind.”

When all the three girls reached Kariyani, got to the place where the Swami was halting, they bowed down and touched the feet of the Swami who asked them.

When the Swami asked them under whose care and guidance they had been able to reach there? The girls at once replied that they were accompanied by a Brahmin who had offered them sweet balls to eat, and cold water to drink. Also he removed their pain by pulling out the thorns which had pricked their feet.

“He has brought us here safely otherwise we three of us would have lost our way in the forest.”

“O Girls! It was I who helped you. Why don't you recognize me? I offered sweet balls, I gave you cold water. I picked up the thorns from your tender feet? Let me give you all the signs and marks on the way. Let me describe them as a proof.”

The Swami smiled after giving the detailed account of what had happened on their way to Kariyani.

The names of the girls whom Shri Hari accompanied to come to Kariyani were PANCHU, NANU and RAMU. The Lord had a special place in His heart for young devotees. He took special care and showed great concern to remove their pain and make them happy.

- Prof. Madhusudan Vyas

Vadodara

RAM NAAM SATYA HAI

*Lord Ram's Name
is the Ultimate Truth!*

At the time of death, you cannot be disloyal. All your life, you run after money, and when you die, your mind and your body will be given to Ram. How will you manage? All your life you did something else and when you are about to die suddenly you think of Ram. How will this happen? Others might say Ram Naam Satya to your dead body, but you will be gone. You are not there anymore. Everyone else will also say these words and then go home, do other things. They're saying these words for others not for themselves. They're saying these words so when they die, someone says these words for them. This is the give and take of the world, every transaction is calculated. But when you wait for death to think of God, it is not fair. Why don't you start thinking and devoting yourself to God right now? Why are you procrastinating? What is going to benefit us we do it instantly but whatever does not, we leave it for later.

It's not about stressing on prayer; it's simply stressing on how you should keep God in your mind.

Tulsi Vakil
Amdavad



RAS DARSHAN

LALJI BHAGAT

Jnan Baug, Vadtal

Hoji Matvala

OH BLITHESOME

*Hoji matvala soi magarur,
Ranbich shish lade jo matvala.
Shura jag me sant hai, Aur sab laaj majur.
Manko krut mane nahi, Tandhan janat dhoor.*
(Brahmanand Swami)

One who is blithesome, is always full of spirit with pride. He offers his head to fight the battle, like a warrior. Only he is brave in the world, all others are doing shameful labour. He does not follow the orders of the mind and believes body and wealth like dust. He has fixed his feet on the battlefield by holding in his hand the sword in the form of the knowledge of the Guru. He is wearing an armor in the form of chaste character and a helmet in the form being tri-quality-free. He has given up expectation of the body including the entire material cosmos. He destroys the delusion but never leaves the battlefield. Instead of the material world, he is attached to Hari only. Brahmanand transcends higher and higher on the path of liberation by following words of the Guru.

This lyric is written by Brahmanand Swami, who had seen all types of happiness and luxury of worldly life, and after experiencing them who entered the stream of supreme, eternal, spiritual and peaceful happiness which is above all types of material happiness. These are not the words

written by way of guessing, listening or seeing but, Brahmanand Swami has expressed his Satsang based divine self-experiences.

Only those who are blithesome can remain proud. Blithesome means intoxicated, excited, full of ecstasy and carefreeness – all these are the synonyms of the word 'blithesome'. But here the addiction is the addiction of the form of Lord Swaminarayan. So, this carefree pride and ecstasy comes from the worship and devotion of Lord Swaminarayan and the carelessness is about the abandonment of all types of material happiness. In short, all his beliefs and desires have stabilized in the form of Lord Swaminarayan. This type of special devotee can be called blithesome.

Here pride does not mean ego but the pride for some higher and ideal aim which is related with the elevation of the soul through the worship of Lord Swaminarayan. This pride comes from the servitude and the nearness of the element of Brahman. So it can be called sacred and selfless pride which makes the blithesome. This is not the sign of the ego emerging from the gaining of gross body but it is coming from sacred ecstasy of attaining the nearness of the element of Brahman and the bliss of Lord Swaminarayan, so the carefreeness and pride are resulting from that

spiritual attainment. It is not intoxication of liquor but, it is the ecstasy of drinking nectar. An alcohol addict person drinks many glasses of wine but here the Saint has drunk many rivers of elixir. He fights an internal battle against the internal enemies and steadily makes progress on the road to the imperishable abode.

'Only the saint is brave in the world and all others are doing shameful labour, because the saint does not follow the desire of the mind and recognizes body and wealth as dust.' People live a life full of drudgery and in this routine life, a saint is the only brave person because, saints do not follow the thoughts and moving ideas of the mind and do not follow all the desires of the mind. In this world, people give more importance to body and wealth but the saint understands both of them like dust.

Adbhutanand Swami was one such brave saint. The incident when he entered asceticism is a wonderful one in the entire Sampraday. Once, Sundarji, the Divan of the King of Bhuj, had come to Saurashtra on the occasion of the marriage of his nephew. He was carrying a sword which was considered as the symbol of the presence of the groom in Kshatriya culture. On his way, he halted at Bandhiya village along with the procession. There he got the news that Lord Swaminarayan was present in that village. So, Sundarji came to Maharaj and bowed to Him.

Shriji Maharaj asked, 'Who are you?' Instead of giving his name, Sundarji said, 'I am your servant.' Shriji Maharaj asked the same question three times and for three times Sundarji gave the same reply. So Shriji Maharaj asked, 'What is the feature of a servant?' Sundarji replied, 'The feature of the servant is to work as per the orders of his master.'

By listening to this Shri Hari said, 'If you are a servant, get your head shaved, put on saffron clothes, take a round to Kashi and then come back to me.' Sundarji did the same and he set out by wearing saffron clothes.

Shriji Maharaj asked Muktanand Swami, 'Tell Swami, did I do the right thing?' After some thinking Mukta Muni humbly said, 'Oh Maharaj! You are the God. So what You are doing is always right and it is out of our power of understanding. But, the fact is that Saints and Sadhus have to face many troubles in Saurashtra. In Bhuj they get peace due to the nice rule of Sundarji, You have made him an ascetic, who will make Bhuj and Kutch a peaceful area?' Then Shri Hari said, 'If you had told me this thing before, I would not have made him an ascetic.' So Shriji Maharaj sent a messenger to inform Sundarji to return back. After coming back Sundarji began to offer dandvat pranam to Shri Hari. Again Shri Hari asked, 'Who has come?' The reply came, 'Your servant has come.' Then Shri Hari said, 'If you are my servant, remove the saffron clothes, put on new nice clothes and complete the ceremony for which you had come.' Sundarji removed saffron clothes, put on the dress as before and bow down to Shri Hari.

Before leaving that place Sundarji said, 'For me it is alright but kindly do not give such bitter test to anybody else because he will not be able to pass that exam.' There was the feeling of subtle ego in the servant attitude of Sundarji. Then Shriji Maharaj wrote a letter to Mancha, Sura, Somla, Alaiya, Mulu, Naja, Matra, Mamaiya, Aja, Jiva, Virdas, Ladha, Kala, Kamalshi, etc. to give up their household life and become Paramhansa.

Contd.



HINDUISM

The
Root
of
Eternity



Tat Tvam Asi

In the year of 1857, an ascetic who had taken a vow of remaining silent since 30 years, had decided that he would only say one word at the time of his death. He lived happily in his spirituality.

One moonlit night, he left for a walk. By mistake, not wanting to go there, he reached the barracks of the British and got caught.

॥ तत्त्वमसि ॥

He did not speak anything because of his vow. The British believed he was pretending to be an ascetic, and was actually a spy, so they picked him up and beat him severely. Blood sprung out of his chest and the ascetic laughed, and said his last words - That Tvam asi - you are also that.

30 years ago he had taken a vow that he would say these last words while dying.

What he said is marvellous. It is the true meaning of the Upanishads, the true meaning of all religions, the true meaning of all things - Tat Tvam Asi - you are also that.

At his last breath he did everything towards the man who beat him, telling him that you are that too - you are God too. This was his final test! Even in his enemies he could only see God; even in death he could only see Him. No other test can prove his love for the Absolute Almighty better.



inspiration

the inner BEAUTY

loyalty

truth

Right Justice



There is a story of two friends, Ram and Shyam. Sitting on the steps of the temple, they were gossiping. Madhav, a third person joined the two. They started chatting. They got so immersed in talking that the day almost ended, it was evening time. Madhav said, "I'm terribly hungry". Ram and Shyam said, "Yes, we're hungry too". Ram said, "I have 3 rotis!" Shyam said, "I have 5 rotis! Let's eat." But the question was how to distribute 8 rotis amongst 3 people? Ram suggested an idea. He said, "Let's make 3 pieces each of all rotis. So 8 rotis will make it 24 pieces. And 24 pieces, according to 8 pieces each, we will be able to distribute easily amongst us 3.

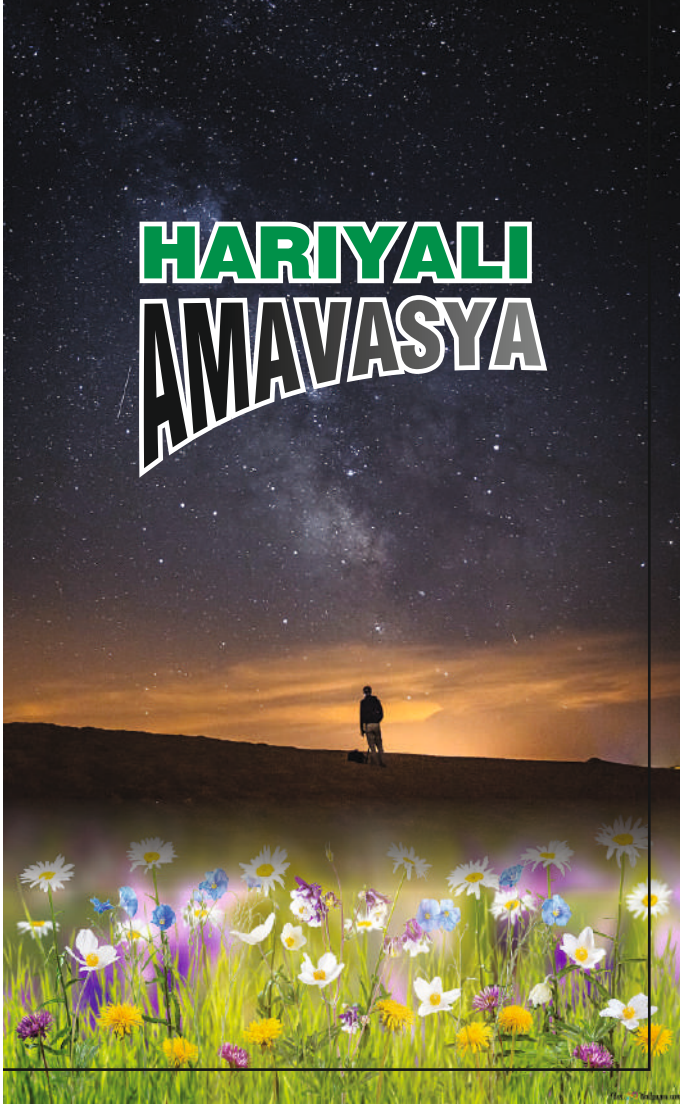
All 3 appreciated Ram's advice and did likewise. They slept off on the temple's staircase itself. In the morning, Madhav bid them goodbye and thanked them saying, "Both of you gave me roti which took care of my hunger. As a gesture of gratitude, I want to give you 8 coins of gold. They were thrilled and accepted the 8 gold coins most excitedly. Ram said, "Let's distribute 4 each." Shyam said, "No that's not fair. I will take 5 coins, and you should get 3."

The argument reached heights, so they went to the temple Pujari (temple priest) for his opinion of who should get how much? The Pujari felt it was right distribution of 5 and 3 each but was a bit confused. So he said, "Do one thing, leave the gold coins with me and come in the morning. We will resolve it in the morning." When the Pujari slept at night worrying about this, he had God in his dream. He shared the dilemma with God. God said, "Ram should get 1 and Shyam should get 7." Pujari was flabbergasted initially. He asked, "How and why so?"

God explained, "See Shyam had 5 rotis. With 3 parts each, he broke them into 15 pieces. And Ram had 3 rotis, and he broke them into 9 pieces. Now he only gave 1 piece and kept 8 to himself. And Shyam kept 8 for himself and gave away 7 pieces. So Shyam's donation is much bigger. I feel this is how it should be distributed. This is the right justice according to me - 7 to Shyam and 1 to Ram." Pujari was impressed listening to this. He said, "I wouldn't have given justice this way ever." Accordingly, he distributed the gold coins.

We talk about our sacrifices. We did this, that but why did we get so less in return? God didn't do justice to us. But the vision by which God does justice is totally different from our perspective. Be satisfied. Don't worry, be assured. God's justice is always right. Whatever you are getting is not because of your sacrifice. It's given as per your ability/energy, and dedication; everything is seen and balance created thereafter. Be rest assured, whatever is happening with you is absolutely right and is how it should be.

HARIYALI AMAVASYA



Amavasya means we live together, Ama = We, Vasya = Live (together). It is believed that the Sun and the Moon live together on this day. The tendency of the Sun is hot and the feature of the Moon is cold.

As hot and cold features stay together on this day some people believe it as destructive and in-auspicious. In reality, this situation brings rhythm in the cosmos.

Scriptures declare that the deities come out to meet each other on this day. For this reason, the weapons like sword, big knife, dagger, axe and spear are tied to the idols of God in the temple on this day.

How can you call that place and day inauspicious where all the deities get together in order to meet each other? On

this Amavasya day we worship Laxmiji who is most dear to everyone and that also at midnight of the last day of the annum.

Our scriptures consider this Amavasya day as the best time for Sadhana of Mantra, Tantra and Yantra.

The month of Shravan has been considered the best for the worship of Lord Shiva among all the deities. The day previous to the beginning of Shravan, the last day of the month of Ashadh is known as Divaso or Hariyali Amavasya. It is the inniator of 100 festivals so it is called Divaso. Divaso is such festival which keeps the life of man fresh, healthy and lively.

The period between Divaso and Dev Divali includes about 100 days. During these 100 days we get over flowing tide of festivals like Rakshabandhan, Janmashtami, Ganeshotsav, Navratri, Dushera, Diwali, etc. As per Hindu scripture we stay awake for 24 hours on other festivals, but the wakeful period for Divaso will be for 36 hours, and for this reason Hindu scriptures give more importance to this festival of Divaso. So one who observes Vrata on Divaso has to stay awake for 36 hours. On this Ashadhi Amavasya people start the worship of Lord Shiva with faith.

On this Divasa day people stay awake as it is the last day of Ashadh month and as a part of Jayaparvati Vrata, green plants are sown. This vrata is meant for wishing good health and prosperity of the family. Our far sighted Rishis who wrote Upanishadas always cared for the well-being of the society.

So they recommended that new plants should be planted on this Divasa day so that your desires may be fulfilled. In order to get the grace of Laxmiji the plant of Tulsi, Banana, Ambelica and Bilva should be planted. For the purpose of having good health Brahmi, Pipal, Flame tree, Ashoka, Ambelica plants, Tulsi and Sunflower may be planted.

In order to get good fortune, Coconut, Ashoka, Arjun and Banyan should be planted near the house. Pipal, Neem and Kadamb should be planted near the house for the purpose of getting children. On this

day Shankh Pushp, Flame tree, Brahmi, Tulsi should be planted in order to get sharp intelligence. Neem and Kadamb etc. should be planted on this day for the purpose of getting happiness and wealth.

In fact, all these beliefs are connected with the protection of environment. If you grow these plants the atmosphere around your house will remain green and fresh.

Growing of the plants around the house has been recommended and connected with religious beliefs with the purpose to maintain balance in the environment. We destroy nature in order to satisfy our needs. So, balance in environment can be established in this way and we can protect and preserve the values of nature. With this purpose in mind our ancestors had recommended to grow particular plants near the house and had connected this activity with religious beliefs. For these reasons, it is also called Hariyali Amas. This Hariyali Amas is the festival for protection of the environment.

Along with the celebration of Hariyali Amas, there is the importance of Pipal worship in Hindu society. All the vegetation in this world is meant for the welfare of human life. Pipal tree has been considered sacred for the liberation and upliftment of our ancestors. The Pipal tree is believed to be another form of Lord Vishnu. It is called Veda tree because a trio of deities are residing in it. The Pipal tree gives out 25 x 7 times more oxygen than other trees. People could understand well the importance of oxygen especially during the Covid period. Lord Krishna has also said in Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta, 'Among all the trees I am Ashvattha tree.' In this way, He has His identity with the Pipal tree. There is much power of living cell in Pipal tree and its energy is the destroyer of evils and promoter of life span. For this reason, the worshipers wind cotton threads around the trunk of Pipal tree in order to get benefit of this hidden energy.

Shastri Swami Bhanu Prakashdasji

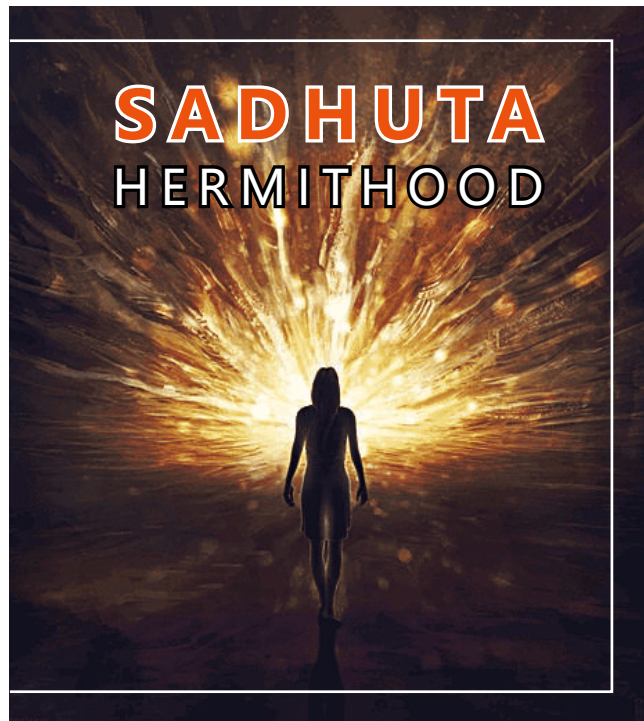
Gurukul, Porbandar.

I have not become a Sadhu or Hermit in order to escape from material life but, I have become a Sadhu to attain Hermithood. The more I assume asceticism or Hermithood the more the material world gets released from me. Material life had never been mine; so what should I be leaving something which belonged to me or something which had never belonged to me?

It was my wrong notion that I believed material world as akin to me, so renouncing material world is also a notion or a belief. If you think with quiet mind you will find that Hermithood means naturalness and not any type of action. Hermithood is not my attainment but my original form.

There is fine statement in the Geeta.

Till this time we have not been able to reach one's home, we have moved from door to door and yet remain unsatisfied.





SHIKSHAPATRI

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE DIVINE



Lalji Bhagat, Jnan Baug, Vadtal

I, Sahajanand Swami, write this Shikshapatri - Gospel of Life Divine - from Vadtal to all My followers, residing in various regions.

- Bhagwan Swaminarayan
(Shikshapatri V.2)

Then He refers to His-wards residing in different states regions of India for whom He writes this Shikshapatri. First Acharya Shri Raghuvirji Maharaj analysis the word “Ashrit” as Aushrit. If anybody takes shelter of God with the expectation to get some fruit, his devotional shelter will come to end as soon as he gets that expected fruit. But the word Ashrit or follower applies to those who remained unconditionally in the shelter forever. Those who take shelter with the expectation of fruit become happy during material life but those who take shelter with selfless devotion attain the imperishable abode and get the blessing of Lord Swaminarayan.

So the words “My-wards” used in verse no.2 apply to the wards who have taken shelter with selfless devotion. They always remain in Satsang and show unconditional and selfless devotion for God. Firm faith, unconditional devotion etc. elements are coupled with the life of such devotees and God addresses them as His devotees. God has equal feeling for every individual despite cast, creed and colour. He shows mercy to every individual who takes His shelter.”

In this verse Sahajanand Swami addresses such people as, “My-wards” so such devotees who have sincere faith in the form of Lord Swaminarayan never postpone the reading of Shikshapatri. The reason is that as Lord Swaminarayan feels the sense of belonging for His wards, the devotees also share the same feelings for Shri Hari. So we should keep in mind that the feeling of love or the sense of belonging is

at the centre of the wards into “My-wards” or “Nijashritan”. Lord Swaminarayan addresses His-wards with the feeling of love and mercy and has written Shikshapatri for the guidance of His-wards.

Let us try to understand the word “Shikshapatri”. The aim of writing Shikshapatri is to provide guidance to His-wards about how to act for routine and accessional matters in life. It is one type of motivating letter conveying a very significant message, the handbook of good conduct. Shiksha means education. It indicates the dos’ and don’ts of routine life and giving education about how to protect religion. All these meanings have been given in Shikshapatri Bhashya and here I have tried to interpret in simple language.

Here the word Shiksha has been used in the sense of such education which inspires any liberation desiring individual to rise from the level of common social life and to attain spiritual height by being associated with religious elements. The soul whose living standard and death standard are very low but, if he gets associated with Shikshapatri, the sacred qualities like truth, vrata, penance, kindness, tolerance begin to enter his life. Such changes take place because Shriji Maharaj has written such commands in Shikshapatri that the seeker’s moral and social level goes up and then religious culture develops in himself. The element of devotion rises in him as the element of religious culture goes to a higher level. Then he can progress on the spiritual path, so the word Shiksha mean such education which rises his moral standard, then social standard.

From social level he is elevated to religious standard and finally he is capable to touch spiritual level. So, Shikshapatri means such written content, which inspires the individual to rise from common level of humanity to the spiritual level of divinity. The collection of welfare causing pages means Shikshapatri. Lord Sahajanand Swami as a unique teacher provides Shiksha meaning education. He has written such words on every page of the Shikshapatri which brings peace to every soul in this world which is full of pains and troubles like the sea fire. No word of the Shikshapatri is meaningless or deceptive. Lord

Swaminarayan wrote in Vadtal, such Shikshapatri which may benefit all the souls in the cosmos and lead them on the path of welfare. Let us refer to the words of Nishkulanand Swami in his volume Shikshapatri Bhasha, “Oh wards of Mine, I am writing this Shikshapatri in Vadtal. Take My words (in Shikshapatri) as last and final.” Shriji Maharaj wrote Shikshapatri in V.S. 1882 in Vadtal. It should be noted that Shikshapatri is the sigma of His preaching because Lord Swaminarayan has put the essence of His lifetime work in the form of Shikshapatri. These words are last and final., it means there is no better word which can bring better welfare, “I have talked on many topics during festivals and Samaiya celebrations at different places at different times, and you have listened to them. Now I am telling you the final words which you may hold in your hearts.”

Shriji Maharaj wrote these words in V.S. 1882 and He says, “These words of Mine are final.” He wrote these words in V.S. 1882 and left for the abode in V.S. 1886. So it is not enough that you read four or five verses of the Shikshapatri everyday as a routine, you should “hold the words in your heart”. If we hold the words of the Shikshapatri in our heart, Lord Swaminarayan, being heartscient, will reside in our heart (in the form of speech) and will guide our activity on the path or welfare. So we should hold the words of the Shikshapatri in our heart. He is addressing the words of the Shikshapatri to the male and female wards residing in different regions of the country. The instructions given in the Shikshapatri are meant to bring happiness to all. What is Shiksha? And how are the orders given in the Shikshapatri? The answer is, “these imperatives are meant to bring happiness.”

Muktanand Swami, in his volume Shikshapatri Bhasha, writes “by holding all holy scriptures in heart” which means Sahajanand Swami has penned the Shikshapatri by holding all the holy scriptures in His heart. In other words, the Shikshapatri is the alpha and omega of all sacred scriptures. If an elderly person in the family thinks that his final moment is near, he begins to think about the welfare of his family and tries to offer a permanent system or arrangement, which may continue to be implemented after his death. In the

same way, in the form of the Shikshapatri, Lord Swaminarayan during the later phase of His life, tries to offer a permanent system by following which His-wards can attain welfare even after His departure from this earth. It is such system in the form of code and conduct that, by following it His-wards can get material welfare and then attain the God's abode. So He decided to offer counseling to His-wards in the form of the Shikshapatri which would bring happiness during material life and then lead them on the path to the imperishable abode.

He wrote such Shikshapatri in Vadtal that as a sacred volume it can bring welfare not only for Satsang but also for the entire humanity. This is the final attempt in his life to release the stream of Satsang. Therefore He says, “You hold these words of Mine in your heart.” Lord Swaminarayan offers final injunctions to hold the words in the heart and live the life by obeying those words, and that is the essence of this verse. Lord Swaminarayan instructs every ward, as Krishna did to Arjuna with the feeling of affection and kindness. So, we should put His words into practice with the feeling of love and respect. We can attain success in religion, wealth, desire and liberation if we follow these instructions at every step in our life. Verse number 2 in the Shikshapatri contains very significant meaning. Right at the opening of the Shikshapatri, Lord Swaminarayan offers affectionate motivation to His-wards about how and why the words of the Shikshapatri should be held in heart and should be implemented with love and respect. Also you should keep in mind the interpretation of the word “Sahajanand Swami”, and if we remain continuously associated with that meaning we can get real definition of “pleasure” and where is that place in which pleasure resides? That place is the form of God. We should firmly resolve, “I will live my life up to the words written by Sahajanand Swami and will find pleasure in His form.”

The hidden meaning of verse number 2 is that we should give commitment to God about following His words and finding real pleasure in His form.

Adhyatma

P H I L O S O P H Y



Knowledge is better than study, dhyān is better than knowledge. Renunciation of fruit of Karma is better than Dhyān. One can get peace by renouncing in this way.

11 11 - 12 11

Lord Shri Krishna wants to suggest through this verse the study carried out mechanically like a computer or a parrot fails to produce real knowledge. Instead of that psychological and rational approach to principle can bring better knowledge. Dhyān is better than the knowledge, received through listening, reading, discussion, Satsang and contemplation and experience. If the knowledge received does not persist in daily practical life, what is the use of this knowledge? The contemplation of knowledge is essential. Through continual reiteration, knowledge gets consolidated and interwoven with the blood.

It becomes a part of culture and nature. The renunciation of the fruit of action is better than Dhyān. Such renunciation will be possible when mind and intelligence are balanced and under control. Care should be taken that ego and sense of possession do not shake them. Only he can renounce the fruit of action who has established God in the place of ego. When you do some action, your mind get engaged in guessing about the fruit of action. If this process continues one does not get peace and peace of mind goes away. If I do some action for the sake of God, in that case God is the donor of fruit; if

this thought enters in your mind you will get peace. Today in this materialistic world. We can see enmity between brothers, father and son, in order to get wealth and property but amidst such cut-throat materialization we find goodness somewhere because a few great men always renounce the fruit of their actions.

Such type of people always do actions for super Brahman Narayan and offer the fruit of action as an oblation to God. They say, "If the Karma is not mine how can I take its fruit?" Lord Narayan also does not accept that fruit!! "This is the fruit of that action." He says, "Lord Narayan says, "How is this sacred action related to Me because I am Akarma?" When great people leave this world they do not carry the sacred actions with them because Lord Narayan does not accept those actions. So those actions remain on the earth and serve like fertilizers. As a result we find goodness, selflessness, morality, culture on this earth. Renunciation of fruit wins. Great people never think about the fruit of action.

When Shankaracharya set out from the south, some great persons asked him "What will gain by doing this?" Shankaracharya wanted to remain one with God and he saw God in other people also and by flowing that Ganga stream of knowledge, he reached Badrinath. And he established four monasteries in four directions.

These monasteries are not four buildings but they are abodes of light of knowledge.

Bhagawad Pad Shree Ramanujacharyaji reached Kashmir and set out after receiving Bodhayan Philosophy from Bodhayan Rushi, the worshipper of the direct form of Lord Narayan. As he covered the distance of 150 kilometers, some people went to him by the advice of a decepota and out of conspiracy, snatched the book from him. But most talented Ramanucharya during the travel had learnt the book by heart before the deceivers could come and snatched the book and by that Bodhayan Philosophy spread the knowledge for direct form of Lord Narayan. He renounced respect or insult and thought in the interest of liberation desiring people. There are numerous great people who renounced the fruit of Karma which became fertilizer from which the Indian civilization has evolved and nourished. Human life has reached higher level.

In spite of many foreign invasions this civilization has subsisted. The foolish invaders did not know that civilization cannot be destroyed by breaking buildings. Civilization cannot be destroyed because it is interwoven with the blood. (Indians should also keep in mind that civilization cannot subsist only by preserving historical buildings!). Nothing belongs to me, even this body is not mine. God has created me to play and enjoy in this world. So as per his plan and desire I have to act by being an agent. When He is the doer of action I should not bother about the fruit of action. In this way the great people who are sitting on the shoulder of God live a satisfactory, pleasant and cheerful life because they are totally won with God. They are united with God and do not get separated even for one moment. They are God Himself.

Such seekers are great God Himself. Now God describes such seekers having perennial peace in the next verse. By listening to this description we feel the description of God Himself.

This is the description of that Yogin who has reached the highest point of achievement. God sings the praise of the sons who have become one with God. The quality and importance of that great persons are the saying as God. Because at this point, both are identical.

Lord Krishna in this verse wants to say that peace can be attained only by renunciation. Renunciation means rejection of something which brings unrest and discomfort. It means the rejection of such behavior in practical life which would cause hindrance in the life of others. Suppose we have caught a female cobra which is striving to get free. But we do not release it so both the cobra and the man who catches it suffer unrest. If we release it at a safe place both of us will get peace. We are holding so many things like the cobra and are complaining about loss of rest and peace. We cannot drop what we are holding. So internally and externally we have to face loss of rest and peace.

Peace will come very soon if we can drop these things which are harmful. We should try to detect which is that thing which causes unrest and discomfort. It is not proper to give up something which brings peace, rest and comfort in your life. Unrest can come due to the rejection of auspicious things. Many people reject garment, wealth, footwear, comfortable residence, wife, family and count themselves as a great ascetics. Such people stake their renunciation in the market and create goodwill in the public.

The importance of renunciation vanishes under the effect of a fake goodwill and the renunciation which should bring the vision of God, becomes an article of display and vanity. Display is never stable but Darshan of God is stable and permanent. Display remains important as long as there are spectators to look at it. In the want of spectators display becomes unnecessary. In this way hub of vanity is created in the life of the man who uses renunciation for display.

In fact renunciation is a means of worship to attain God but very often it will becomes a means to get public acclaim, honour. Therefore, Lord Krishna says that renunciation can bring endless peace. Perfect renunciation generates peace, in fact to forget what you have renounced is the sign of real renunciation.

- Shastri Swami Bhanuprakashdasji

Porbandar Gurukul



Health & Spirituality

Dr. Dhanwantarikumar Harinath Jha

(M.B.B.S., B.A.M.S, M.D. & Ph.D Ayurveda)

Improving Immunity through Spirituality

Immunity is one of the most important aspects of our overall health and well-being. A strong immune system not only helps us fight off diseases and illnesses, but it also helps us recover quickly from any sickness or

infection. While modern medicine and Ayurveda offer many ways to boost our immunity, spirituality can also play a significant role in improving our immune system.

Spirituality is all about connecting with our inner selves and finding peace, happiness, and contentment in life. When we are spiritually strong, we are better equipped to handle stress, anxiety, and other negative emotions that can weaken our immune system. Here are some ways in which spirituality can improve our immunity:

1. Meditation : Meditation is a powerful tool for reducing stress and promoting relaxation. When we meditate, we activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which helps to calm the mind and reduce the production of stress hormones. This, in turn, helps to boost our immune system and improve our overall health.

2. Gratitude : Being grateful for what we have can have a positive impact on our immune system. When we focus on the good things in our life, we reduce stress and anxiety and improve our mental health. This, in turn, helps to boost our immune system and improve our physical health.

3. Forgiveness : Forgiveness is an essential aspect of spirituality. When we forgive others, we let go of negative emotions such as anger, resentment, and bitterness. This, in turn, reduces stress and anxiety and improves our immune system.

4. Sattvik diet : A sattvik diet is a diet that is

pure, wholesome, and nutritious. It consists of foods that are easy to digest, rich in nutrients, and free from any toxins or preservatives. A sattvik diet includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and seeds. Such a diet is essential for improving our immune system.

5. Exercise : Regular exercise is essential for maintaining good health and boosting our immune system. It helps to improve blood circulation, reduce stress and anxiety, and strengthen our muscles and bones. Exercise can also help to improve our mood and overall sense of well-being.

6. Ishvar Pranidhan : Worshipping or Praying to the Almighty is always kept as an important tool in Ayurveda under the Sadvrutta and Aachar Rasyana, as this not only improves the our concentration and confidence out of the many benefits but it also leads to secretion of many special hormones and enzymes in our body which help us fight and recover from the most dreadful diseases.

In conclusion, improving our immunity is not just about taking medication or following a particular diet. It is also about adopting a spiritual practice that can help us reduce stress, anxiety, and negative emotions. By connecting with our inner selves, we can improve our overall health and well-being, and strengthen our immune system to fight off diseases. A sattvik diet and a healthy lifestyle can also play an essential role in improving our immune system.

G O D

The Ultimate Philanthropist

All the incarnations had been generous to their devotees. However, Lord Swaminarayan's generosity had been unparalleled throughout the universe! Even Gunatitanand Swami's discourses contain a benevolent talk of Shriji Maharaj, in which he says : It is the earnest desire of Shriji Maharaj that "One huge ship is filled with ten million boats. I want to fill such one thousand million boats." This means He aims to grant Moksha to such millions of Jivas.

Therefore, Shatanand Muni addresses Shriji Maharaj in 'Janmangal Stotra' as 'Bounteous Sahajanand (ॐ श्री उदासय नमः) Maharaj turns out to be an attendant to the devotee's attendant. Such Shriji Maharaj; we have attained. We should not feel miserable now. In this article, let's have Darshan of Shriji Maharaj's generosity.

There is a village named Kanthkot in the region of Kachchh. Kachara Bhagat resided there. He was very poor. Shriji Maharaj kindly arrived at his house. Kachara Bhagat was pathetically perplexed. He was lost in deep thoughts regarding what to offer Maharaj in dinner?

His wife Dhanbai knew her husband's state of being so confound. She at once suggested. "Why are you so baffled? We have got a precious saree used in marriage only. Take it to the grocer, mortgage it and bring grocery. We shall pay and bring it back on earning money."

Kachara Bhagat went to the market and mortgaged the saree for grocery. Shriji Maharaj instructed Brahmachari to cook enough for four persons. Shriji Maharaj and Brahmachari dined and offered Prasad to the couple.

Shriji Maharaj always ruminated over when to get free from this herculean debt of Kachara Bhagat. Two years passed since the occasion took

place. Once again, Shriji Maharaj arrived up at Kanthkot. The Rajmata (Mother to the Prince of the state of Kanthkot) was married to the king of Sindh. That time she was present there at Kanthkot. Her name was Rambai. She came to the Lord for Darshan. She gifted all her gold ornaments at the lotus feet of Shriji Maharaj.

Shriji Maharaj said, "Rambai, will you be pleased if I hand over all these ornaments to someone else?"

Rambai said, "I want to please You presenting all these ornaments. Do as You like. They do not belong to me anymore now. My pleasure lies in Yours."

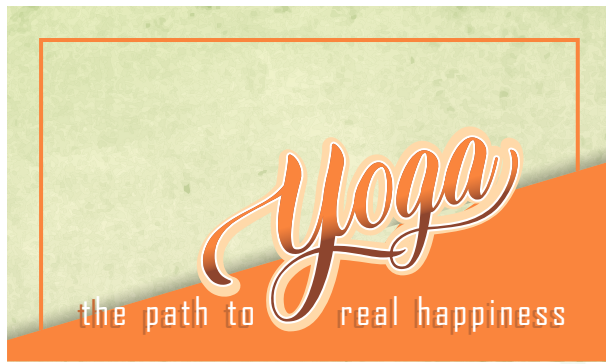
Shriji Maharaj at once got up from His seat and said to Kachara Bhagat, "Bhagat, spread your scarf." Bhagat thought that there must have been some job for him to do. He obeyed Maharaj and spread his scarf. There and then, Maharaj placed all the ornaments and said with a smiling face, "All these ornaments are yours, take all these as they belong to you."

Kachara Bhagat said, "Maharaj! Why do you give me all these ornaments?"

Shriji Maharaj said, "Kachara Bhagat, You have mortgaged Dhanbai's saree (to offer us a dinner). Pay for it and bring it back. I never keep anyone's debt. Today I got rid of your debt."

So is the Lord's generosity to His devotee! The same kind of thing had taken place hereto before. Once, Prembai of Diu had offered precious costumes and gold ornaments to Shriji Maharaj. Shriji Maharaj had handed over all these to Vipra Dinanath Bhatt standing beside Him. Shatanand Muni has not addressed Lord Swaminarayan 'the most generous' meaninglessly!

- Parshottambhai Kacha Dhoraji



5. Pranayama (Bio-energy Control)

When the gross and the subtle internal channels are cleared the aspirant should learn to practice Pranayama.

When the movement of air inside the body becomes unsteady, the mind becomes unsteady and when the movement of air inside the body becomes steady, the mind becomes steady.

After adopting a steady and firm posture one should learn to regulate Pranas – bio-energy. It should be learnt stage by stage as guided by the teacher. It should be practiced with the mind at ease. It should be learnt slowly (No undue haste.)

The word Prana means the (energised) air moving inside the body. Ayama means regulating. Thus Pranayama means regulating the internal energised air or bio-energy.

Pranayama is of two types. Sagarbha (impregnated) and Agarbha (unimpregnated). In Agarbha Pranayama there is no meditation upon the recitation of a Mantra. In Sagarbha Pranayama there is meditation upon the recitation of a Mantra (sacred formula). The saints declare that Sagarbha Pranayama is better than Agarbha Pranayama. With the practice of Sagarbha Pranayama the goal is achieved faster.

Each one of these is said to be of four types. Puraka, Rechaka, Kumbhaka and

Shunya. Now listen to their characteristics. Just as one sips water through a hollow reed of a lotus, air can be sucked in. This sucking in air is called Puraka. Breathing out the air is called Rechaka by the expert Yogis. When a Yogi stops breathing in or breathing out and remains in a steady state after breathing in, it is called Kumbhaka. (This state is akin to the fully filled in pitcher). Thus, Kumbhaka is of two types. When the air is kept steady inside, it is called Antar Kumbhaka or Abhyantar Kumbhaka. The other Kumbhaka is called Bahya Kumbhaka wherein the air is kept steady after exhaling. Thus when Prana is kept steady inside at Apana i.e. at the rectum it is one type of Kumbhaka and when Apana is held steady at Prana at the navel it is said to be another type of Kumbhaka.

In Puraka air should be breathed in while (mentally) reciting Aum sixteen times at slow speed. It should be held in while (mentally) reciting Aum thirty-two times. The air should be breathed out while (mentally) reciting Aum sixteen times.

Or otherwise the Yogi aspirant should (mentally) recite Vishnu Gayatri as many times as possible while practising Pranayama.

There are three subtle channels – Pingala to the right, Ida to the left. They are respectively called Surya Nadi and Chandra Nadi. Between them there is the third (sanctifying) channel called Sushumna which contains spiritual fire.

While breathing through the left nostril – Ida, the breath should be held in and then through the right nostril – Pingala one should breathe out slowly and steadily.

Or while breathing through the right

nostril – Pingala, the breath should be held in and then through the left nostril – Ida one should breathe out slowly and steadily.

When the Yogi practices Pranayama slowly and properly, he would have the miraculous power that cures a disease. Otherwise the result would be reverse.

Kumbhaka Pranayama (as stated earlier) should be practiced slowly twenty times each in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening and at night. Thus the practice should be done four times. In ordinary practice of Pranayama the aspirant would perspire. In the better practice of Pranayama the body would become unsteady and in the best type of Pranayama the aspirant's body rises up again and again (i.e. he feels himself quite light).

Keval Kumbhaka or Shunyaka Pranayama is that wherein the breathing in or breathing out of air ceases. This is the background for still higher type of Pranayama called Shunya Vedha.

The best experts on Yoga declare that, as a result of Pranayama the mind becomes fit for concentration. (Note : It also relieves the subtle curtain of ignorance which blocks the divine enlightenment).

The Shunyaka Pranayama, though considered to be the best is not easy for an average aspirants. It can be practiced only by one whose mind has become free from all worldly sensual desires. When perfection is reached in this Pranayama, all the ten types of Pranas become calm at their respective places. At that time, the Yogi, though in the awakened state appears as if he is in the state of sleep. The body becomes steady and he

hears the internal subtle sounds.

In the beginning he hears the subtle sound of the flute and he becomes internally awakened. Then he hears the sound of the flute. Then he hears, respectively the sounds like those of the drum, the conch, Dundubhi, Bheri etc. and also the sound of the roaring clouds. He hears many such sounds.

Hearing all these sounds he becomes extra-ordinarily enlightened and he sees light in his heart. Then in the heart he hears the sound of Aum in the form of breathing in and breathing out in his gross, subtle and astral body and also in such three bodies of the cosmic being.

For realizing Aum, the Yogis recite the mantra AUM NAMO NARAYANAY AUM SWAMINARAYANAY NAMAH with every breath after giving up lethargy.

Before the realization of this AUM – Pranava he visualizes Nada-Brahma which is infinite and omnipresent in the form of an extremely bright conglomeration of divine light. From that divine light he visualizes infinite number of lights in the form of the solar discs. From that ocean of light he visualizes Aum emerging from the same and having the form of subtle, white brilliance. There he hears the sounds of Pranava having the brilliance of circulating light. Such sounds go on rising and fading. Lightnings spring up and fade in the clouds. Waves rise and fade in the ocean. In the same way the sounds of Pranava rise and fall. A Yogi visualizes all this.

(Contd.)

- Shantikumar Bhatt

HAPPINESS



Happiness is a state of mind, unless one feels mentally happy, nobody can make one happy. There are different reasons and sources which can make you happy. It could be social, economical or otherwise. If sources are favourable to someone he will feel happy. Happiness does not come naturally. It requires to be cultivated. Normally if you get what you desire, you feel satisfied and happy. But desires have no limit.

Before you are satisfied with the acquisition of desired wish your mind starts craving and dreaming for more happiness. Thus you cannot enjoy the happiness you are in. It is like running after illusive water. Human being suffers from endless desires to be happy and those endless desires make him unhappy. Satisfaction and contentment are the sure solution to remain happy. Contentment is the power which gives happiness.

Impermanence is the nature and character of happiness. Happiness is never enduring but transitory like passing wind. It is uncertain and precarious. It cannot be saved, accumulated, stored or gathered for future. So when you feel happy keep enjoying. Happiness consists not in having, nor in possessing, but in enjoying and sharing as it is elusive and transitory; like an image of moon on flowing water.

Happiness cannot be stitched or woven in the fabric of life. Most of the people miss the opportunities they come across to enjoy happiness, as they do not grab the opportunities. Happiness is like a butterfly which is beyond your grasp. Instead of pursuing it, sit quietly and it may alight upon you. Best thing is to cultivate the habit to be happy and you will be happy.

Pradip Jaywadan Mehta
Advocate, Surat



Belief & Trust

THE DIFFERENCE between BELIEF and TRUST

Once a rope walker was walking on the rope tide between two multi-storied buildings and his son was sitting on his shoulders. Hundreds and thousands of people watched the scene by holding their breath. Fighting against the swaying rope and blowing breeze, that artist staked his life, and the life of his son well, he successfully completed the length of the rope.

The crowd was overwhelmed, clapping and whistling were heard from all sides. People were taking photograph of the artist and some of them took their selfie with the artist. Some of them shook their hands with him. Then the artist went to the mike and spoke, 'Do you believe I can do it again?' The crowd said with one voice, 'Yes, of course you can do it again.'

He further asked, 'Do you really believe?'

The crowd said, 'Yes, we really believe.' We can bet, you can do it again successfully. Then the artist said, 'Do you fully believe it?' The crowd said, 'Yes, we believe it fully.' Then the artist said, 'Okay. If you give me your son I will take him on my shoulders when I walk on the rope.' The crowd became silent.

The artist said, 'You are frightened.' A moment before you said, 'You fully believe that I can do it.' In fact, this type of faith or trust is just a belief; you have a belief but not trust in me. So there is a difference between the two.

In the same way, when you say there is God, it is just a belief. But to trust in God is a different thing. We believe in God but we hardly trust Him. If you have full trust in God why should there be anxiety and tension.

!!! Just think !!!

LESSON *of* LIFE

“My boss drove a luxury car everyday and it was my duty to greet him and to open the gates for him, as I worked as a watchman in his villa. But he never responded back to my greetings.

One day he saw me opening the garbage bags outside the villa in search for any leftover food. But, as usual he never even looked at me, it was like as if he never saw anything!

The very next day I saw a paper bag at the same place, but it was clean and the food inside was covered well. It was fresh and good food like someone had just brought it from the supermarket. I didn't bother as to where it came from, I just took the paper bag and I was so happy about it.

Every day I found this paper bag at the same place with fresh vegetables and all that we needed for home. This became my daily routine. I was eating and sharing this food with my wife and kids. I was wondering who this fool could be? To forget his paper bag full of fresh food everyday.

One day there was a big problem in the villa and I was told that my boss has died. There were too many guests coming to the villa that day and I didn't get any food that day, so I thought that one of the guests must have taken it. But the same thing happened the 2nd day, the 3rd day and the 4th day.

It went on like this for a few weeks and I found it difficult to provide food for my family, so I decided to ask the wife of my boss for a raise in my salary or else I would quit my job as a watchman.

After I told her, she was shocked, and asked me, how come you never complained about your salary for the last 2 years? And why is this salary not enough for you now? I gave her so many excuses but she was not convinced!

Finally in the end, I decided to tell her the truth, I told her the entire story of the bag of groceries, and as to how it was my daily provision. She then asked me as to when this stopped? I told her after the death of her husband. And then I realized that I

stopped seeing the paper bag immediately after the death of my boss. Why didn't I ever think of this before? That it was my boss who was providing this for me? I guess it was because I never thought that a person who never replied to my greetings could ever be this generous!

His wife started to cry and I told her to please stop crying and that I'm really sorry that I asked for a raise, I didn't know that it was your husband who was providing me with the meals, I'll remain as a watchman and be happy to provide my service.

His wife told me, I'm crying because I've finally found the 7th person my husband was giving this bag full of food. I knew my husband was giving 7 people everyday, I had already found the 6 people, and all these days I was searching for the 7th person. And today I found out.

From that day onwards, I started to receive the bag full of food again, but this time his son was bringing it to my house and giving it to my hand. But whenever I thanked him, he never replied! Just like his dad!

One day, I told him THANK YOU in a very loud voice! He replied saying to not feel offended when he doesn't reply, because he has a hearing problem, just like his dad!”

Oh! We have been wrong so many times judging others without knowing the true story behind their actions. Be kind and courteous in dealing with others, for everyone is fighting a hard battle. Be careful.

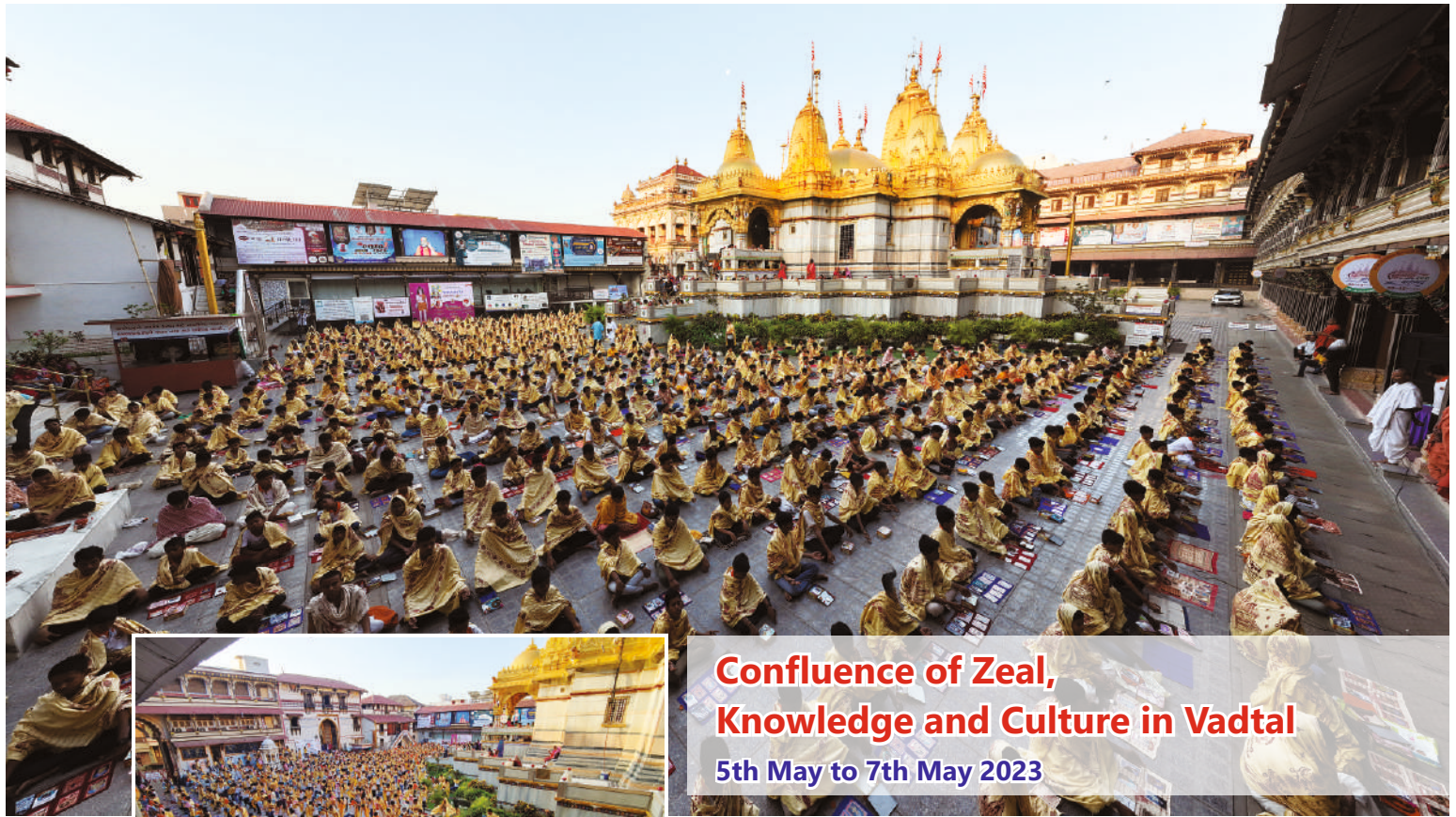
Don't just jump to conclusion, because that is truly not an exercise, it may cause you more harm at the end of the day. Many of our problems are caused by how we process what happens around us. Don't judge a situation you have never been in. Be humble enough to learn. You do not know it all. Lets change the way we feel about ourselves and others.

There are two sides to a story: “Don't believe everything you hear. Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about.”

prasadi



This same **FAN**
used to remain
in proximity of
Bhagwan Swaminarayan
and served Him
exquisitely like
all of His fans!



Confluence of Zeal, Knowledge and Culture in Vadtal

5th May to 7th May 2023



In the materialistic world, adolescents have numerous choices of aimless roaming, electronic gadgets and a vast entertainment world where, they can spend their time, day

and entire life without any meaningful gains. In this social scenario, Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (Vadtal) launched a workshop (Shibir) to empower youngsters with cultural heritage, human values and harmony. The Shibir took place in Vadtal, with a total of 2,572 participants including 1,972 boys and 600 girls.

Each day of Shibir began with Prabhatferi accompanied by prayers. Then students sat on Yoga mats. A skilled and trained Yoga teacher taught (them) different Yoga-asan. Here, students gained unparalleled experience and took an oath to start Yoga practice daily for such benefits.

To pacify their curiosity, and foster a learning attitude and to explore something good, interactive sessions were arranged. Through these sessions participant students learned many valuable things. They acquired enough strength to counter the daily hurdles of student life.

Inspiration and Aspiration are vital tools for conquering the world's competition and challenges. Vadtal Temple has constructed a solid foundation for the bright future of the students in the Shibir with the help of motivation sessions. Students who attended the Shibir, came from M. P. and Gujarat. However, each student had a different perspective on life. Motivational speakers impacted and emphasized by boosting their morale.



The Shibir was successfully celebrated with the auspicious presence of H.H. Acharya Maharaj, Shri Rakeshprasadji Maharaj (Vadtal Gadi), Lalji Shri Saurabhprasadji, Chairman Dev Swamiji, Kothari Shri Dr. Santvallabhdasji, Nautamprakashdasji and successful efforts of Swami Narayancharandasji, Budhej and Gopal Bhagat, Jnan Baug and many more saints of Vadtal temple.

- Amit Trivedi