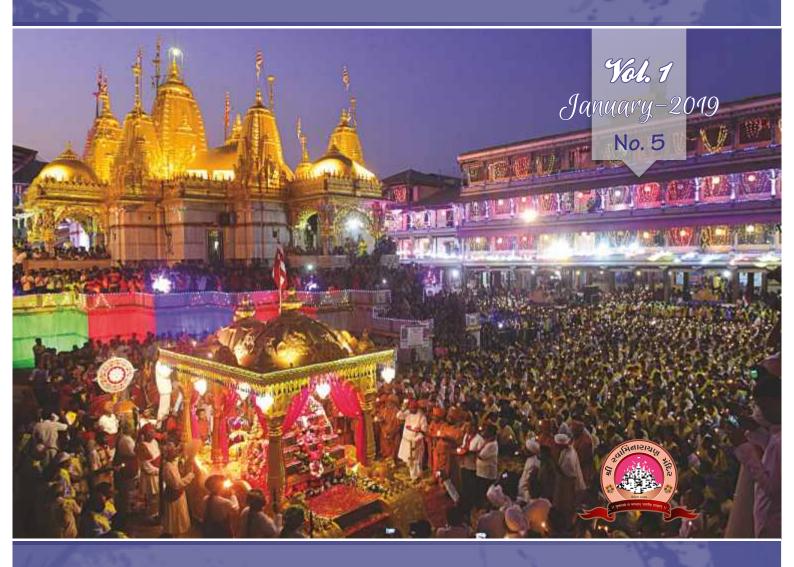
॥ श्री स्वामिनारायणो बिन्नयतेतराम् ॥

Blessed be the Poonam (full-moon day) bound male and female devotees who rush to Vadtal on every Poonam. Each step towards Vadtal qualifies themselves for the fruit of great Yajna and destroys the pains of birth and death!

- Premanand Swami



sahajANAND

The Eternal Bliss



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

PUBLISHER

Chief Executive Kothari Shastri Shri Ghanshyamprakashdasji

MANAGING EDITOR

Shastri Swami Dr. Santvallabhdasji

EDITORS

Parshad Shri Lalji Bhagat Shri Harendra P. Bhatt

DESIGN & CONCEPT

Hari Smruti Jnan Baug, Vadtal



No.	Subject	Author
01	Prelude	H. H. Acharya Shri Rakeshprasadji Maharaj
02	Shikshapatri	Shantikumar Bhatt
03	Uttarayan	Shantikumar Bhatt
04	Ekam Sat Vipra	Prof. Harendra P. Bhatt
05	Evedom	Prof. Rajnikant Pancholi
07	Inspiration	
80	Whats & Whys	Lalji Bhagat
10	Health & Spirituality	Dr. Dhanvantari Jha
11	The First	Prof. Harendra P. Bhatt
12	Spiritual Life	Ramesh Soni
14	Comics	Jnan Baug, Vadtal
17	The Purpose	Swami Bhanuprakashdasji
20	Ras Darshan	Lalji Bhagat
21	The Greedy Guru	Prof. Madhusudan Vyas
22	Vachanamrit	Prof. Rajnikant Pancholi
24	Prapatti	Rajendra Shukla

Published by

Shri Swaminarayan Temple, Vadtal Sansthan

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

Phone: +91 268 - 2589728, 776 E-mail: vadtaldhamvikas@gmail.com Web Site: www.vadtalmandir.org





Lord Swaminarayan, during His time, delivered sermons at different time, places and regions which were compiled as Vachnamruts by four Nand saints under His guidance. It becomes very essential for all the devotees to understand them in its true sense. Lord Swaminarayan delivered these divine Vachnamruts (nectar like sermons) for those who wish to please the Lord in his spiritual quest, one who wish to meditate in his heart the Lord and who wish to please the Lord all the time, and who has everlasting faith in this Satsang, and who possesses all fidelity (laaj) for this Satsang and who accepts the Lord as Sarvopary.

This reminds me of the Vachnamrut Sarangpur 18. Shreeji Maharaj has incorporated many important points in this chapter. One important point he explores is that of good Satsang. Shreeji Maharaj states that if a faithful devotee comes into contact with a true saint, then the devotee readily accepts the teachings of the saint and that brings out good virtues like Saddharm, Vairagya, Vivek, Jnan, Bhakti in his heart and also drives away the bad vices like Kaam, Krodh etc. Likewise if a devotee comes into contact with a pseudo saint, then the devotee loses his good qualities.

To explain this, Lord Swaminarayan gives a very apt example. He talks about the Khar (infertile) land. Where no grass or plant or tree would grow in. But, if a flood washes out the land and new fertile soil comes with flood then there grows everything. The soil brings with it the seeds of grass, plants and trees. The Khar land becomes fertile land.

Lord Swaminarayan has given a clear message. The association matters much. Good company brings out virtues in a better way while the bad company removes every good thing. One should always opt for a good saint. The world is like a river. The flood may bring good soil or washes out everything. The company of a good person is always beneficial. The company of a bad person leads to bad results. In the company of a bad saint the devotee gets disappointed. He can't see the right path. He fails to remove his vices; instead his dilemma multiply. In such a state of mind, he either remains sleep or cries or quarrels or does something wrong. If he fails in any of these things he may end his life even! What matters is a good company. A true saint is a good company. He is a right guide in our life. One should go for such saints who always worships and makes others worship Lord Swaminarayan.



SHIKSHAPATRI THE GOSPEL OF LIFE DIVINE



Shantikumar Bhatt

 \mathcal{A} life not lived for others is not a life.

My dear followers should serve the mother, the father, the Guru and the sick person, as long as they live and according to their capacity.

- Bhagwan Swaminarayan (Shikshapatri V. 139)

- **Q.** Why should we serve our parents as we are born only out of their carnal pleasure?
- A. This is not always true. Indian parents pray God to give them ideal children before they enjoy carnal pleasure. We are born out of the seed which is the combination of ova from the mother and sperm from the father. Thus, we being part and parcel of our parents, when we serve them, in fact, we really serve ourselves.
- Q. Why should we serve our Guru?
- **A.** Our Guru spiritual teacher moulds our mind and guides us for our spiritual liberation. In return he deserves our service.
- Q. Why should we serve the sick persons?
- **A.** This is our social obligation. Such service earns merits-punyas for us. It reminds us of how our Lord Shree Hari served Sevakram during His sylvan tour of India. It also pleases and satisfies our conscience.
- Q. What does all such service reflect?
- **A.** This spirit of service shows that we have developed maturity of mind which is essential to enjoy true bliss.
- **Q.** What is the significance of this commandment?
- A. This commandment is for followers of all

- religious faiths. It is for all classes, communities, castes and groups, civilized or uncivilized, cultured or uncultured. It is for any part of the world. It is applicable to all times. Therefore this is the universal vow.
- Q. If I don't serve my parents, what would happen?
- A. You will be condemned by the society as a heartless fellow. You are likely to be antisocial and self-centred. As a thankless fellow you will be trusted by none. No religious practice done by you will bear fruit. Bhagwan Swaminarayan will be highly displeased with you and the gates of Akshardham will be closed for you. If your worthy parents sigh, their sighs will become curse for you, leading you to hell-like life!

The scriptures declare as follows:

In Yajnavalkya Smriti-Mitakshara Commentary, Naradji declares : A person who does not serve the parents is not entitled to inherit his parent's property.

A sick person should be served with medicines, food, water etc. A sick person means any person who is sick or who is injured, according to Parashara Smriti. According to Yajnavalkya, serving a patient is as good as making donation of a cow or like serving a god.

If you have to choose between being kind and being right, choose being kind and you always be right



Going up and up on the ladder of life is the normal ambition of every man. In nature when the roots are firm downward, the tree rises above the earth. Water rises up as vapour forms the benevolent clouds. The flame of a lamp rises up. The sacrificial fire serves as a priest and takes our prayers to heaven. Even the cyclone rises up.

So Uttarayan, the festival of flight has a special significance to the members of Holy Fellowship of Shree Swaminarayan Bhagwan. It is the day to strengthen our will-power to make memorable progress; only making the sky our limit.

The festival of flight is also called Makarsamkranti to commemorate victory of the goddess Samkranti over the demon Samkarasura, the symbol of adulteration.

From this day the sun crosses the tropic of Capricorn (MAKARA) and rises towards the tropic of Cancer (KARKA). So there would be more light, delight and longer days in the northern hemisphere for six months.

This festival of flight is associated with kite flying also. Bhagwan Shree Swaminarayan has rightly compared the image of God with the kite and our mental modifications with the thread of kite. When we start flying the kite, the kite moves here and there and at times it dives down. But a time comes when the kite becomes steady in the sky and then we can see nothing but the

kite. This is how we should meditate upon God. (Vachanamrit-Vartal-5).

This festival is known as UTTARAYANA. UT-means up, TAR- means at a greater height and AYANA-means going. So this is the day to resolve to rise higher and higher above petty quarrels, clashes and competitions.

This day is associated with Bhishma, the mighty commander-in-chief of Kauravas. From his death-bed of arrows he gifted to the world, practical wisdom to make the best out of life. This section of Mahabharata is called Shantiparva, whose subsection is Mokshaparva often referred to in our religious scriptures.

The symbols of all religions are associated with the upward journey of man. The jews have clouds, angels and flying pigeons. Christians believe their Father to be in heaven. Islam has the symbol of the crescent and the star. Jainism has the symbol of Siddhashila or the Indra-dhwaja. So is our AKSHARDHAM.

In the western countries the zealous youths dig a well in the snow and dive therein; a relic of Hindu custom of having a holy bath at the lake, the river or the sea.

On this day, there is a tradition of giving in alm, sesame seeds and the cow. We can also donate for the cows kept at many temples. This is also the festival of sweetness. So sweetballs made from sesame seeds and gur are presented to our nearest and dearest ones.

The kite-PATANGA compared with the Moorti of God by Shree Hari is a Vedic concept where the word PATANGA is used for God (RIG-10-177-1). So PATANGA means the image of God.

There is a story about Bhagwan Shree Rama, flying a kite in His childhood. The kite reached the heaven where the daughter-in-

law of Indra caught the kite and she wouldn't release the same! She relented only when Shree Rama promised through Hanumanji to give her Darshan at Chitrakoota.

But the past shouldn't be our pastime. In the modern world Benjamin Franklin sent his kite upward and brought down electricity, as Prometheus got fire from heaven in the past. Markoni also used a kite in order to invent wireless message system. Balloons are sent upward to study atmosphere. And lastly the festival of flight should pay a tribute to our space-ships flying to the distant planets.

Holidays are meant to make us holy and not merely car-washers or house-cleaners. So, on this day (14th of January) let us also resolve to rise higher and higher through holiness.



All that which exists is one. The wise call it by many names.

Friedrich Niezche proclaimed: 'God is dead.' In the 1960s, Time magazine ran a 'God is dead' cover story attributing the death of God to science and technology.

Singmund Freud, the father of modern psychology, urged people to regard God as an illusion, nothing more. He said our concept of God only symbolised an infantle desire for a father figure, and that we should outgrow this desire. Science should replace God. He thought, science was not an illusion.

By the 1990s, people were talking about things like 'Can spirituality promote health?'
Latest revelations in cosmology and quantum physics are fostering this paradigm shift.

Ironically, Scientific research that once questioned the existence of God, is also now providing evidence to strengthen our belief in a supreme power. Modern physics and cosmology are leading us to the conclusion that we are all an essential part of one single

source from which creation itself sprang. Scientists call this source the 'unified field' with consciousness as its apparently inseprable aspect.

Today, science and religion seem to be saying the same thing: A single entity created the universe and is still present everywhere, maintaing and governing the fundamental machinary of everything in the universe.

- Prof. Harendra P. Bhatt

God is not One among the many.

God is the One behind the ever changing many.

- Dr. Radhakrishnan (Bhagwat Geeta 7-24)



Prof. Rajnikant M. Pancholi - Vadodara

Rambai wedded to the Lord

Lord Swaminarayan in His religious discourse at Loya said:" He who recognizes the greatness of the Lord or His saints and remains steadfast in his devotion to the Lord, would willingly give up anything – be it public censure, royal favors, physical comforts, wealth, even his spouse – if he is male, his wife and if she is female, her husband."

During those days when Lord Swaminarayan started His Holy Fellowship, His followers were fascinated by His ways of renunciation and celibacy. These followers, men or women, saw little to admire in worldly joys and comforts. They oriented their minds to the devotion of the Lord and practice of celibacy. Many man took a vow to celibate life, giving up wealth and woman. Women followers were also not behind in this.

There were many saintly women in our Holy Fellowship who also took the vow to lead celibate life. They never married; they led chaste life devoting their time to the service of the Lord. Among these, history is proud to note such saintly names as Jivuba, Laduba, Rajbai, Jamkubai, Ladhiba, Gangama, and others. In their life of renunciation, severe penance and personal rectitude, these saintly ladies at times would put even great saints to shame. Their steadfast devotion and their deep faith in the Lord earned them special favors from Lord Swaminarayan.

One such saintly lady was Rambai. She was born in Koli caste. She was an offspring of the

domestics in the service of a prince called Alaiya Khachar. Alaiya Khachar was a devotee of Lord Swaminarayan. He was a kind master. Rambai became an orphan at a very early age. Her kind master raised her as his own child. He consoled the little orphan girl: "Don't worry my child; it is sad that you have lost your parents. But now on I am your father. My house is now your house."

Alaiya Khachar was a man of God. He was a devout member of the holy Fellowship of Lord Swaminarayan. Many a time Bhagwan Swaminarayan or His saints used to visit the house of Alaiya Khachar for religious discourses and devotional sessions. These holy men affected young and impressionable Rambai. Their teachings inspired Rambai to follow a life of religious renunciation. She would not think of marriage and life of worldly pleasures. Often she went to Gadhada where she met the ladies of saintly devotion like Jivuba and Laduba. These ladies had chosen the difficult path of remaining celibate and leading a life of religious penance. Such a life for women was very difficult in those days.

Rambai as she was growing up used to think that she would follow the same course of life as was chosen by Jivuba and Laduba. These princesses had renounced the life of royal comforts and chosen to live the hard life of the religious order of Lord Swaminarayan. Rambai developed aversion to the ordinary pleasures of life.

As Rambai grew into marriageable age her foster father prince Alaiya Khachar thought of finding a suitable husband for her in the Koli caste. Rambai was modest enough not to talk

about her feelings. She had now made up her mind to follow Samkhya Yoga and lead the life of a celibate Yogini. But how can she convey this to her foster father? Girls in those days nurtured to be modest about their feelings. Alaiya Khachar thought, as a father it was his duty to arrange her marriage.

Alaiya Khachar started making trips to find out a suitable match for her. Once when he started on one such trip on his horseback, Rambai came forward and held the reins of the horse. "Bapu", she said, "I want to talk to you."

"What's it, dear child? Tell me quick," said Alaiya Khachar.

There was a shade of red on the young lady's face. The father saw the kind of bashfulness that comes to the young lady who is about to talk of her intimate feelings. Alaiya Khachar saw that his daughter has now come of age. "Oh my child," he said, "I know what you have in your mind. It is time for me, your father, to seek a suitable bridegroom for you my dear child. When I see your hennaed hands at your wedding, I would think I have fulfilled my duty as a father. Then after that ceremony is over, I shall devote my time in counting the beads of prayer to the Lord."

But the father could not guess what thoughts were agitating the mind of the daughter. "Bapu," she said, "It is not what you think. Bapu, don't exert yourself anymore on that count. I've already chosen my bridegroom!"

"What do you say my child?" said Alaiya Khachar.

"Yes, I've told you the truth," she said.

"Dear child, I only want to see you happy. Tell me if you have made your choice. Who is it?" asked Alaiya Khachar.

"Bapu," she said, "If you already want to know, I will tale you that I've dedicated my life to Lord Swaminarayan. Let your search stop there."

"No my child," said Alaiya Khachar, "What would the people say? Wouldn't they censure me that I, being your foster father only, did not choose a proper bridegroom for you and married you with rich dowry? No, I shall marry you with full pomp suitable for the daughter of a princely family."

"But Bapu," she said, "I want to devote my life in the service of the Lord. That is the one and only goal of my life."

"Dear child," Alaiya Khachar said," that is not an easy way of life. It is a way strewn with difficulties at every step. It is like treading on the razor's edge, my child. One wrong move and you are doomed."

"Bapu," Rambai said, "I know that. But I have full faith in my resolve. With the grace of our Lord that path like that of the razor's edge, will become a smooth way strewn with flowers for me."

"Look my dear daughter," Alaiya Khachar said, "It is easy to speak but very hard to practise. Don't be carried away by your emotions. Let me do my duty and you do yours. It is my duty as a father to seek a suitable match for you and not to make you a Yogini."

"But Bapu," said Rambai, "you are going in the wrong direction. If you want to see me happy, then know that my happiness is only at the feet of Shreeji Maharaj. If you make a worldly match for me and give me away in marriage, I shall never be happy."

Faced with this conflict of wills the father and the daughter decided to seek guidance from Lord Swaminarayan. So they sent a man to Gadhada to seek the advice of Lord Swaminarayan. That messenger presented these conflicting views before Him. The reply that Lord Swaminarayan gave was this:

"Let her marry and then worship the Lord."

(Contd.)



The Man With Four Wives By: Sean Buranahiran

re-marry."

Once upon a time, there was a king with four wives. One day, the king got sick and was on his deathbed. Afraid of being in the afterlife alone, he asked his fourth wife whom he loved the most and bought her diamonds, gold and elegant clothing. He asked her, "Would you die with me and go with me to the afterlife?" The fourth wife replied, "I'm sorry, I can't do that" and walked away. He also loved his third wife. He was very proud and would always show her off to neighboring kingdoms. So he called on his third wife and asked, "Would you accompany me to the afterlife?" The third wife replied, "I love my life too much and I'm sorry I cannot go with you. When you die I'm going to

His second wife had always been there for him in his times of need. So he asked, "Would you accompany me to the afterlife?" The second wife replied, "I'm sorry that I cannot help you out this time but what I can do is to arrange your funeral and I would be there for your funeral." A voice called out and said, "I'll leave with you and follow you wherever you go, even if to the afterlife." The king looked and it was his first wife. But this was the wife that he took care of the least. He felt embarrassed and said, "I'm sorry, I should've taken better care of you and given you more attention when I was alive."

The moral of the story is that we all have four wives. Our fourth wife is our body. We like to decorate it with nice jewelry, nice clothing but in the end, it can't follow us into the afterlife. Third wife represents our possessions. We spend so much time trying to gather possessions. But in the end, they cannot follow us to the afterlife. It will be given to other people and divided. Just like the third wife said she's going to remarry.

The second wife symbolizes our friends and family. We trust them; they're there for us in times of need. But the furthest they can go with us is to our funeral and send us off. Our first wife represents our soul. We usually neglect taking care of our soul. That is what will follow us to the afterlife. Care for your body. Keep it healthy. Enjoy your possessions and the comfort they provide. Cherish your friends and family for the love that they provide. But don't forget to take care of your soul. Nourish your soul, take time to be alone, take time to pray, take time to meditate, because it is the source of all of your life. And your most faithful friend. I hope this story can help you or somebody that you love.



Whats & Whys

Answers to the questions of curious seekers

Mantra Jaap

(Chanting the Name of God)

Count the rosary with perfect emotion,

Beads remove the mischief of mind.

Hold in mind body-limbs of Hari, one by one,

utter the Name Swaminarayan.

The rosary has been gifted by Swaminarayan, and Muktanand holds it to his heart, with utmost love.

In this brief stanza, Muktanand Swami advises to worship Lord Swaminarayan with warmth and with uninterrupted counting of rosary. Generally, most people turn rosary beads, but much importance is given to the number of counting. We should keep in mind that the mental state or emotional state of mind is more important than the counting figure. When we turn beads, we should not do it in slurring or slipping style of hurried movement. It should be done with proper speed, keeping the rosary in special pouch called Gaumukhi.

Turning rosary is a means of keeping God in closest memory and therefore, rosary has been called "Shyam - remembrance." It is a tool to remain in touch with Swaminarayan Mantra and thereby stabilize the mind and senses in the idol of Lord Swaminarayan.

Once Lord Swaminarayan was holding a meeting in which Muktanand Swami, Brahmanand Swami, Premanand Swami, Nishkulanand Swami and other devotees were present. Shriji Maharaj asked "Are you turning beads on rosary daily? How many rounds of counting do you make?" Some said hundred, some three hundred, some said five hundred and in this way, each one came out with the number of rounds of turning beads on rosary(one round on rosary = turning 108 beads of that rosary). Then Shriji Maharaj threw a lovely glance at Muktanand Swami and asked "Swami! how many rounds of rosary do you practise per day?"

He replied, "Maharaj, I can hardly do fifty rounds of rosary!" Listening to his words, the devotees in the meeting were surprised, "So great a swami and so small is the number of counting!" To remove their surprise, Muktanand Swami answered "I count rosary only after holding the idol of Shriji Maharaj in my heart. I concentrate on each limb of His body and connect my counting with

each of His body part. If any obstacle comes before the completion of the round, and if I miss the connection with Shri Hari, then counting would fail. While counting 108 beads of rosary, with each bead the idol of Lord Swaminarayan should stay in

my green memory. For this reason, I cannot do as many rounds as others can do."

Shriji Maharaj said, "Listen O devotees! the counting done in this spirit is real counting and chanting, otherwise the rest is only the vanity of the world. Muktanand Swami in his devotional

verse says - Counting rosary beads can control the mischiefs of the mind. Mantrajaap is the best means to control the to and fro vibrations of the mind. Holding each and every body part of the God, chanting Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan we should turn the beads.

Muktanand Swami says, "Swaminarayan Bhagwan has gifted the rosary and I have fixed it with my heart." In our Holy Fellowship, we find a number of prasadi rosaries. We feel that the light of Mantra-chanting emerges from each bead of the rosaries. Premanand Swami has written in Swabhavik Chesta:

Before He goes to sleep at night, He would ask for a rosary; Holding the same in His right hand, He devoutly moves the beads with concentrated mind.

Never allow a mistake to enter, that was the principle divine; This was the natural habit, of Dharmakuvar - Dharma's Son divine.

Though He was the manifested God, He turned the rosary with extreme care. He did this gesture only to preach and teach His devotees the importance of turning beads. He had the habit of never to forget this routine.

What is the general routine in the present time? We back home in the evening from job or service. We take bath, have dinner while watching T.V., read newspapers and other stuffs, then go to bed. Some devotees offer evening rites. Some people read novels before going to bed, but do not show any concern for turning rosary. But if we remember above four lines from Swabhavik Cheshta, and with stable mind chant Swaminarayan Mantra, our soul will get strength and life will be full of happiness.

At bed time, if we follow the activities hostile to God, we will become the victim of mental and physical diseases because we read or watch such material before going to bed

which might pollute our body and mind. At bed time, turning the rosary which connects with God makes our mind, intelligence and sub-conscience very healthy and pure.

A spiritual factor and science of planets (stars) is also connected with the process of turning rosary. First finger, second finger and the thumb (of the right hand) are involved in this process. Generally, the five fingers are associated with five basic material elements. This material body has direct relation with the universe. All the five (material) elements earth, water, air, fire and sky and the planets in the universe have their fixed place in our body. When we turn rosary we keep the first finger straight and keep three fingers turned inward; keeping the thumb on the second finger we count the beads. First finger is kept straight because it is a general belief that first is the finger of sin, so it should not touch the rosary. It is called sin finger because we point that finger at people to criticize them. The planet Jupiter stays in first finger, Saturn in the second finger and Sun lives in the thumb and Sun signifies the element of fire. This truth belongs to the science of astronomy.

(Contd.)

While meditating, just as great waves rise in the sea; when such evil thoughts start surging up, meditation should be discontinued and one should loudly recite the Mantra Swaminarayan and pray God: 'O Merciful to the meek and the poor, O Ocean of mercy!' One should pray to God like this. Then all such evil thoughts would fly away and there would be relaxation. But apart from that there is no other way of removing such evil thoughts.

- Bhagwan Shree Swaminarayan



Health Spirituality

Dr. Dhanwantari Jha - M. D. (Ayurveda), Anand

Yoga and Spirituality

Yoga word is derived from the root 'Yuj' which means 'to Unite' or 'to integrate'. Yoga is an age old Indian science which has been practised in India since thousands of years. Yoga is not just merely a physical form of exercise but a guide to completely harmonise your body with the universe and feel the 'oneness' of the Universe.

योगः कमर्सु कौशलम् / yogh karmasu kaushalam (excellence in action is yoga)

Complete focus and dedication to action without any attachment to the ensuing results is the real key to live a fulfilled life as a true Karma Yogi. This is the core message which Lord Krishna has conveyed to Arjuna while explaining Karma Yoga in the Bhagvad Gita.

There are different forms of Yoga and it can be classified as: Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Ashtanga Yoga/Raja Yoga, Hath Yoga etc... Here, we would be discussing mostly about the Ashtanga Yoga which includes the essence of all these types of Yoga.

Ashtanga yoga as the name suggests has 8 limbs: 1. Yama, 2. Niyama, 3. Asana, 4. Pranayama, 5. Pratyahara, 6. Dharana, 7. Dhyana and 8. Samadhi.

Eight components of yoga

योगः चित्त-विृत्त निरोधः yogah Chitta-Vruttinirodhah— Yoga Sutras 1.2

"Yoga is the inhibition (nirodhah) of the modifications (Vrutti) of the mind (Chitta)".

Swami Vivekananda translates the sutra as "Yoga is restraining the mind-stuff (Chitta) from taking various forms (Vruttis)."

1) Yamas

Yamas are ethical rules in Hinduism and can

be thought of as moral imperatives. The five yamas listed by Patanjali in Yogasutra 2.30 are:

- 1. Ahimsa: Nonviolence, non-harming other living beings
 - 2. Satya: Truthfulness, non-falsehood
 - 3. Asteya: non-stealing
- 4. Brahmacharya : Chastity, marital fidelity or sexual restraint
- 5. Aparigraha : Non-avarice, non-possessiveness

Patanjali, in Book 2, explains how and why each of the above self restraints help in the personal growth of an individual. For example, in verse II.35, Patanjali states that the virtue of nonviolence and non-injury to others (Ahimsa) leads to the abandonment of enmity, a state that leads the yogi to the perfection of inner and outer amity with everyone, everything.

(Contd.)

Ahstang Yoga is a wholesome tool
with limitless modes,
To contemplate Feet of Shri Hari,
is the advice for all.
By coveting the Feet of Shri Hari,
Sensible seeker can get boundless happiness.
After leaving the body,
doubtlessly attains Brahman-hood.
(Premanand Swami)



Whatever happened for the first time during the lifetime of Lord Shree Swaminarayan or in the Swaminarayan Holy Fellowship, is mentioned in "the First" series. Topics covered in this series are of two types: one, related to Lord Shree Swaminarayan and second, related to Swaminarayan Holy Fellowship. Yet, everything is centred around Lord Shree Swaminarayan. The topics, having religious as well as sociological impact, are historical milestones of the Swaminarayan Holy Fellowship. Like them, this is also the first attempt of the author.

15. Umreth Satsangis, the first and the only, who purchased temple land in the name of Bhagwan Shri Sahajanand Swami.

Umreth Swaminarayan Mandir possesses land in the name of Sahajanand Swami and the followers are proud of it.

To erect a temple at Umreth the followers bought a piece of land (North South 115 gaj land East-West 86 Gaj) from a resident, Mr. Jaykrishnaram Bhatt on Vaisakh Sud 10, V.S. 1885 (A.D. 1889).

The Land deed was done in the name of 'Swami Sahajanand Maharaj' on one rupee stamp and is, at present, in the possession of the Vadtal temple. This piece of land is a small part of the present day Shikharbandh temple complex of Umreth. When Shreeji Maharaj came to know about the purchase of land on his name, he became happy and wrote a letter to Nandram Ruparam Thakar blessing all the devotees.

This letter is addressed to Dave Narbheram Manekji and Thakar Nandubhai Ruparam and all the Satsangi of Umreth by Swami Sahajanandji from Gadhada.

Shree Sahajanandji Maharaj was pleased to receive the land deed and the letter. Those

who thought about this are now possessed with the true love for God and they have no death of punya. Those who have true love for god have true understanding.

Vasudev Bhagwan resides at Shwetdweep, while Shree Nar Narayan Bhagwan resides at Badrikashram. They have come to this earth in the form of Shree Krishna Narayan as the son of Bhakti and Dharma, have incarnated as an avtar only to receive your services. Second, following the codes commanded by us, whatever you offer to us that is your good luck. And you place Shikkshapatri for worship in the temple sent through Sadguru Gopalanand Swami. Also arrange accommodation facility for paramhans. We promise you a place in akshardham as we have come for the moksha of people only.

We have considered both of you as elders of the Satsang and let all treat you like that, Make all the followers read this letter and follow it. Those who do not follow this, is Vachan Drohi, Guru Drohi and Vimukh.

On behalf of Swami Sahajanandji Maharaj, Suk Muni wrote this letter on Jeth Sud 11, U.S. 1885.

(Contd.)

There would hardly be anyone who wouldn't have played the game of 'Snakes and Ladders' in their childhood. And definitely, no one would have suspected that this simple game that they are playing metaphorically represents the true rules of a successful spiritual life.

Many would be surprised to know that this game of 'Snakes and Ladders' has roots in ancient India. Back then, it was commonly known as 'Gyan Chopat', and was a little different from the

current version of the game. While it was known by different names in different regions of India; 'Parampadam' in Andhra Pradesh, 'Mokshpadam' in Tamil Nadu, etc., the main theme of the game was its emphasis on 'Karma' and 'Moksha' in human life.

In ancient times, this game was played either on a piece of cloth or on a wooden board. The game was a checkerboard with square boxes, and these square boxes had inscriptions of virtues, like faith, knowledge, devotion, etc. and vices like lust, arrogance, greed etc. It also had drawings of demigods and demons on it at specific places.

From a casual perspective, this game seems like a recreational activity, something which you would enjoy playing with your friends. However, from a philosophical point of view; this game is a representation of life – specifically, the impact of choices in our life. This game was also taught in the Gurukuls of an ancient India, because Rishis believed that the game taught its players how specific actions in life lead to specific reactions, and how situations in one's life are merely a result of one's good or bad deeds.

Picture of ancient Indian 'Gyan Chopat' game

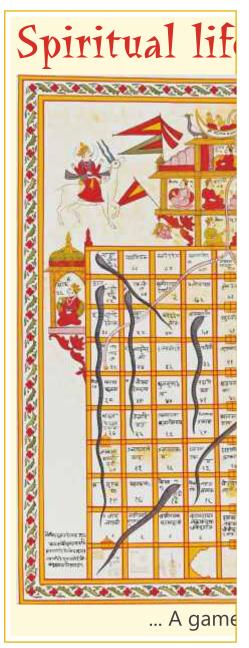
In 1892, when India was under British rule, this game of Gyan Chopat caught the eye of the Britishers. And just like all the other Indian valuables, they also took this game back to England. However, because neither did they understand or appreciate the concepts of Hindu ideology, they kept modifying the game until 1943, when Milton Bradley from England published the first commercial version of the game - 'Chutes and Ladders'.

After its commercial launch, this game started gaining popularity overseas. In United States of America, the game was again modified where the chutes were replaced by snakes – leading us to the current version of the game known as 'Snakes and Ladders'.

Since then, the modern version of the game has become very popular across the globe. Even though the theme of vices and virtues no longer exists in the current version of the game, the basic concept

of the game itself proves to be a very effective tool for teaching the impact of actions to children. In places like Indonesia, this game is even included as a lesson for fifth graders in schools.

The real beauty of this game is its simplicity. And it is because of this simplicity, that any person of any religion can interpret and understand the moral of the game in his own way. As Salman



Rushdie has mentioned in his award-winning book Midnight's Children, "All games have morals, and the game of Snakes and Ladders captures, as no other activity can hope to do, the eternal truth that for every ladder you hope to climb, a snake is waiting just around the corner, and for every snake a ladder will compensate."

Just like, your journey on the game board; surrounded by snakes at every corner, your spiritual

of Snakes and Ladders

journey is also prone to various hinderances and downfalls. Snakes in the game are nothing but a visual representation of vices like egoism, anger, lust, greed, jealousy and negative thoughts. These vices infest our spiritual life, hinder our growth and pull us down to the pits of despair. But what is also important to learn, is that after the downfall we will get opportunities to climb back again. We will get opportunities to obtain the grace of God and saints, which will be our ladder.

The incident of Shivlal Sheth is very famous in Sampraday. It is said that Shivlal - a resident of Botad, was at such a high spiritual state, that every time when Shivlal used to sit in the early morning to worship Lord Swaminarayan, God Himself - in his divine form, incarnated before him to accept his offerings. He used to meditate for several hours everyday and was on perfect track to reach the zenith of spiritual awareness.

However, this incident is about how Shivlal, who was at such a senior spiritual position, saw a drastic downfall in his spiritual journey. It was when Shivlal was working on two major projects – one on pranpratistha of Harikrishna Maharaj in Gadhda, and second on the arrangements of the ceremonious arrival of Archarya Shri Raghuvirji Maharaj in the palace of the king of Bhavnagar. Due to his extraordinary work on both the projects, people around him started praising him a lot. Because of all the flattery, he started feeling disturbed when he didn't receive the ego boost he expected from people, his meditative state started to deteriorate and he could no longer see Lord Swaminarayan when he prayed. Just like the snakes in the game, egoism started pulling Shivlal down.

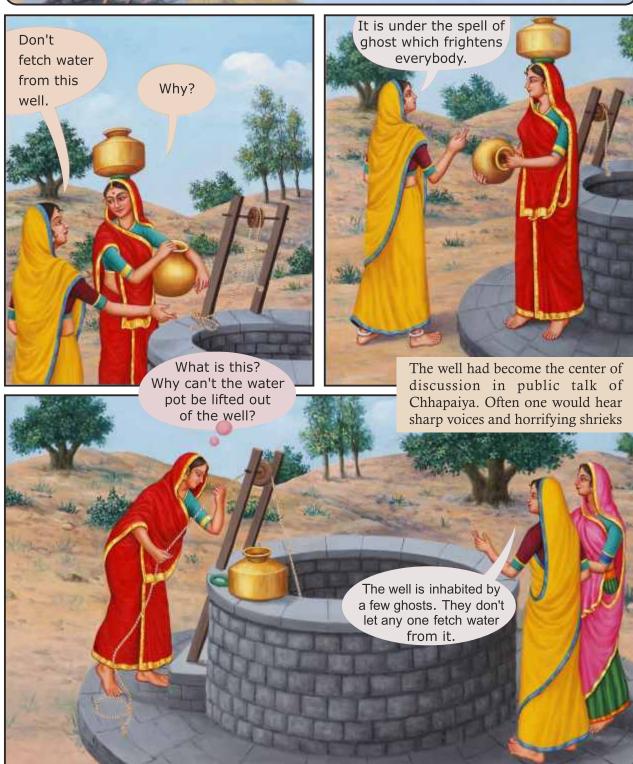
By God's grace, Gunatitanand Swami noticed Shivlal's downfall, and took Shivlal to Junagadh with him to help him get rid of his ego and bring back to his progressive spiritual journey – just like ladders in the game of snakes and ladders.

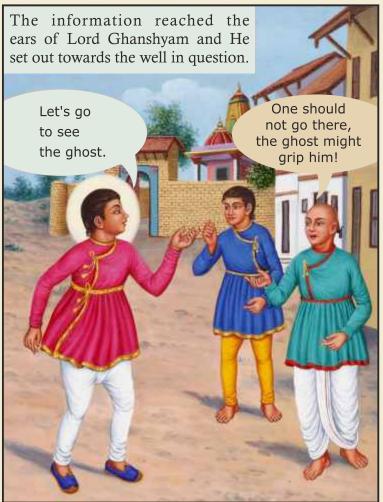
In conclusion - in the game of Snakes and Ladders, snakes are the symbols of downfalls while ladders are the parameters of progress.

The biggest ladders in this spiritual game of life is the grace of God. And grace of God can only be achieved by total surrender. Once you truly give in to the Lord Swaminarayan himself, follow the wisdom of his beloved saints and keep away from vices, God himself will bestow his grace on you – to uplift you towards your spiritual goal.

- Rameshbhai B. Soni (Vadodara)

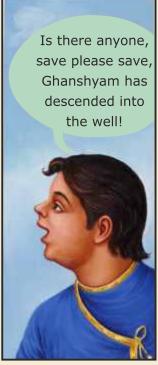




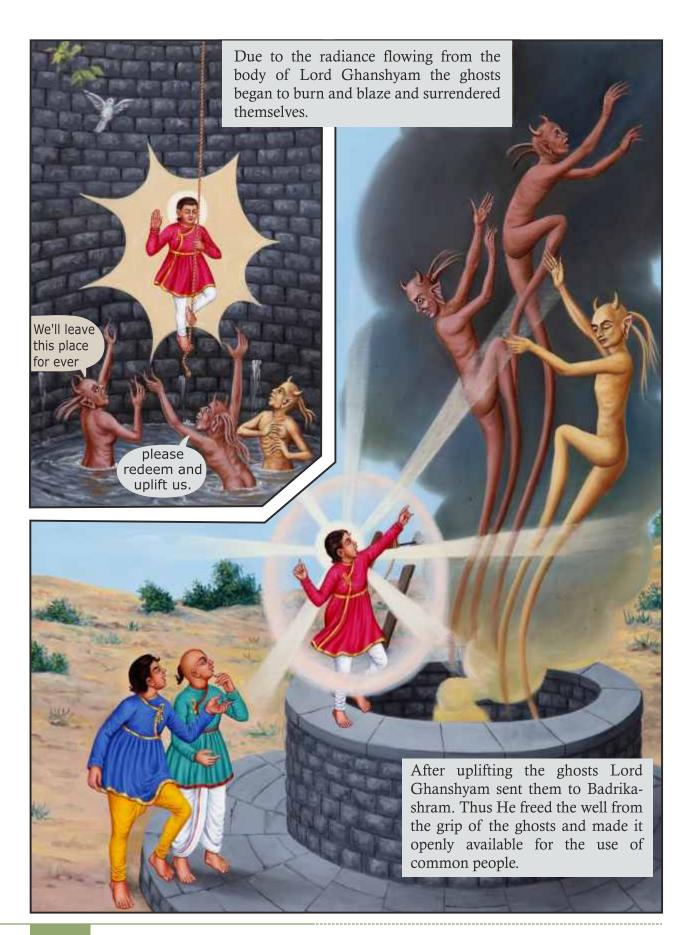














The Purpose

Shastri Swami Bhanuprakashdasji Porbandar

The Play of Destiny

Lord Swaminarayan after the divine demise of his Guru Shree Ramanand Swami initiated Satsang in Sorath and by giving the sermon to lead a virtuous life to individual souls reached at Mangrol, situated on the seashore. He stayed in the beautiful farm of Tamarind trees. Thousands of villagers came to have Darshan of Shriji Maharaj and He gave sermons of religion and morality to desirous souls in the assembly held in the morning and evening.

In that city lived Anandjibhai Sanghedia, the follower of the Guru Ramanand Swami. He was a skilled worker who engraved beautifully on the wood. But he was facing financial problem for his livelihood. Though he worked hard, he hardly earned to meet his end. However he was a true devotee of Lord Swaminarayan.

One day after discussing with his wife he decided that as they did not earn enough livelihoods in Mangrol, they would go to Mumbai to earn more, so that they can lead happy and peaceful life. Anandjibhai himself was such a very good worker of lathe that one could not find any lack in his skills. But in mangrol he could not earn as compared to his skills and due to financial crisis, family and social problems had arisen. Both of them determined to leave Mangrol and went to Mumbai through sea route and work there.

They came to Lord Swaminarayan to seek

His permission on the day of departing. Seeing them in new clothes Shriji Maharaj asked Anandjibhai, 'as you have worn new clothes, are you going to another city?' Anandjibhai replied, 'O Lord! we are not earning enough to lead our life here and we even could not serve you properly. So we both husband and wife thought that we will go to Mumbai and will do any sort of profession to become more prosperous. We came here for Your Darshan and permission. Please shower Your grace upon us and give us your kind permission.'

At that time with slowly slowly smiling face Shriji Maharaj spoke, 'as I was going to perform our morning chores at that time a person of six feet height, wearing costly embroidered shoes and covered with white clothes was in a hurry. I stopped him and inquired who are you? And where are you going with such a speed? At that time he told that I am the fate of your devotee Anandjibhai. He is going to Mumbai so I am going to Mumbai ahead of him to create adverse circumstances there before he reach there. He will remain ill-fated whether in Mumbai or Mangrol. After saying this, that man disappeared within the spur of the moments.'

After hearing this from Lord Shree Swaminarayan, Anandjibhai cancelled his plan of going to Mumbai and said he would do whatever He say. He prepared a very decorative swing at the inspiration of Shriji Maharaj and gifted it to the Navab of Mangrol.

This swing was such a piece that once you swing it with hand or leg, it will remain in swinging motion! The Muslim Navab of Mangrol was very much impressed and pleased by the art and skill of Anandjibhai and gifted him a piece of land to build a house. Believing in Shriji Maharaja's word and promise he dug out the bases of house. He found a large copper cauldron and he talked about this to Shriji Maharaj very honestly. As per the holy commands of Shriji Maharaj he opened the cauldron, he found thousands gold coins and he got prepared an ornament of this gold and gifted it to small prince by meeting the queen of Navab. The queen became pleased and asked Anandjibhai, tell me what can I give you?' At that time Anandjibhai said that the king had not signed official bond of the land given to me as gift. This land does not belong to me until the bond is signed. So it's my humble request to you queen to make this bond signed. By witnessing sincere honesty and candour of Anandjibhai, queen got prepared the letter and bond of gifted land by asking the king.

Anandjibhai was ill-fated but he remained loyal to Shiji Maharaja's command by becoming honest and dutiful. His fate was empty but God is supreme and He has the power to change the fate of His blessed soul.

Here we have to understand the ideology of Karma. As per the the views of Lord Swaminarayan, God resides as omniscient in all the Jeevas. God also gives the fruit of their Karmas to all Jeevas. Here Lord Swaminarayan expresses His own perspective independently which is distinct from others. In other religions, Karma is the Karta(doer) and they do not consider the Lord as the giver of the fruit of their actions. Shreeji Maharaj does not agree with this principle at all. Because the Karma is basically Amurta i.e. unmanned and the good or bad result occurred as a result of perticular Karma is Murtimaan i.e. evident. (Vachanamrut Kariyani 3)

So, according to Lord Swaminarayan, it is not desirable to induce any kind of power of action into Karma. Explaining the principle of Karma, Lord Swaminarayan says, "When this soul acts with predominant attribute of nobility i.e. Sattva Guna, the result is the state of wakefulness. When the soul acts with the predominant attribute of activation i.e. Rajo Guna, the result is dream-state, and when this soul acts under the predominant attribute of staticism i.e. Tamo Guna, the result is the sleepstate. The soul enjoys the three states of wakefulness, dreaming and sleeping, not as a result of his own actions alone but he enjoys them only when God, the bestower of the results of actions, makes the soul enjoy the results of his own actions. God, the giver of the results of actions keeps his inclinations under check. So, at his will he cannot enter from one state of his own actions to a particular state. only when God who makes him do so; but the soul by his own desire or actions cannot enjoy the results of his own actions." (Vachanamrut G. F. 65)

Thus, the Lord is controller, sustainer and ruler of all the activities going on in the universe. And the Lord assumes the sole powers of giving the fruit of the actions to all Jeevas. यः आत्मिन तिष्ठन्नात्मनोऽन्तरो यमात्मा न वेद यस्यात्मा शरीरं य आत्मानमन्तरो यमयित स त आत्माऽन्तर्यामृतः (शतपथ १४–६–५–३०)

That which resides in Jeevatma, and Jivatma is its body, that which is inside the Jeevatma, that Jeevatma does not know Him, that which regulates Jeevatma while residing in it, that your Atma is Antaryami; it is nectar. अन्तः प्रविष्ठः शास्ता जनानां सर्वात्मा (तैत्ति. आ. ३-१२-२)

That which enters in the people and rules, is the Atma of all. अहमात्मा गुडाकेश! सर्वभूताशयस्थितः (गीता १०-२०)

O Gudakesh! I am the Atma of all. I reside in the hearts of all beings. सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सिन्निविष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च (गीता १५-१५). As a heart-scient I reside in the hearts of all. I am the cause for

memory, Knowledge and doubt-clearance. ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानांहृदेशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति । भ्रामयन् सर्वभूतानि यंत्रारूढानि मायया। (गीता १८–६१)

O Arjun! I, the Parmatma resides in the hearts of all, churning them with My Maya. कर्मणां मङ्गलमङ्गलानां च कर्तुःस्म लोकं तनुषे स्वःपरं वा । अमङ्गलानां च तमिस्त्रमुल्बणम् (भागवत ४-६-४५) Lord! You bless them with heaven, who are good-doers and send them to hell who are evil-doers. Thus in the holy scriptures like: Satpath Brahman, Taitarey Upanishad, Bhagwad Geeta, Shreemad Bhagawat, the Lord is proclaimed as the Giver of the fruits of all Karmas. And, it is expected from all the Jeevatmas that they should know Him as the Parmatma. Clarifying this principle Lord Swaminarayan says that the souls become associated with happiness and unhappiness. All this is under the control of Purushottam Bhagawan and all this happens only because God wills so. (Vachanamrut G. F. 78)

The Lord sees to it that the Jeeva gets the true reward of the Karma. The principle of Karmafala is accepted by all the sects of Hindu religion. But, most notes-worthy thing here is that, Lord Swaminarayan does not consider the Karma, the only responsible factor of the

fate but also holds responsible - the region, time, action, the association, the Mantra. meditation of God, the initiation and the holy scriptures. These eight factors are also responsible. Shreeji Maharaj emphatically states that if the previous actions are responsible, then for the virtuous people of Marvad in Rajasthan, the water level of the well should come up! (There is scarcity of the water for all - good or bad people in Marvad). But that does not happen as for the virtuous people, there is no different treatment in the state. Thus the place, time etc. do not act considering the previous actions. Shreeji Maharaj states that the Lord remains active with every moment of the Jeevatma. The Lord provides to His devotees whatever was not available to him

Thus, Shreeji Maharaj shows His devotees the means to remove laxity. The devotees who live as per the commands of Shreeji Maharaj, then he removes all the difficulties of His devotees without even letting them know!

Anandji Sanghadiya had only rancid Jowar in his destiny, but Shreeji Maharaj changed his fate! The Lord's grace help the devotee to live a simple, peaceful and respectful life!

All events take place because God wills them, and just as a dry leaf moves here and there by the force of the wind, we should submit ourselves to the will of God, and practise devotion to Him with joy and keep the mind free from all worries.

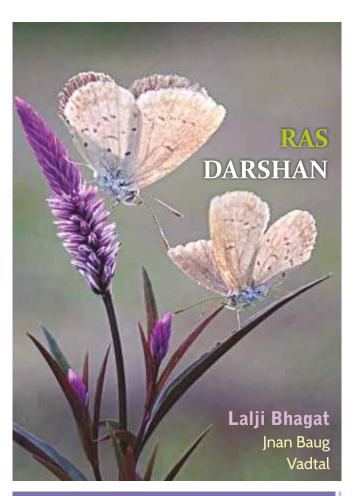
- Bhagwan Swaminarayan (Vachanamrut Gadhada First - 74)

भाग्य विना भटकत फिरे, हुन्नर करत हजार; मुक्त कहे कैसे मिले, जो न लिख्यो करतार.

– मक्तानंद स्वामी

A person may be industrious in a thousand ways but without his powerful stars, if God has not destined, how would he get prosperous?

Declares Swami Muktanand.



Chcha chinta Chita samana

Chcha chinta Chita samana, kari chinta dukh paavat nana; Taate dhan ki chinta chhori, Prabhu-pad mein rakho mann jori. (Manjukeshanand Swami)

Just as everything gets burnt
in a funeral pyre,
Likewise, Worrying
gives you sorrow only;
Break through the clutches of
anxiety for material pursuits,
And engross your mind
at the divine feet of God Supreme.

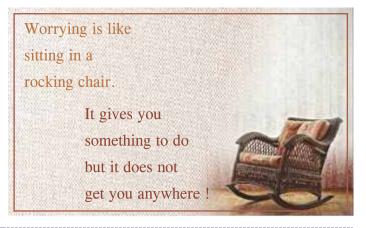
Manjukeshanand Swami with reference to the letter "Ch" explains the cause of worry. He uses the word funeral pyre as a simile for worry. Just as everything is destroyed in the pyre, likewise, if we worry unnecessarily, then we lose out the essence of leading joyous and peaceful moments of our

life. Worrying about the future, man loses out his cheerful Present.

A person who doesn't have wealth, financial security worries about obtaining them all the time, and a person with excess wealth worries that no one snatches it away and that he shouldn't lose it. In spite of having adequate money, he worries and it becomes the cause for his restlessness. So, it is rightly said Taate Dhan ki Chinta chhori, Prabhu-pad mein rakho mann jori meaning stop worrying about wealth and keep your mind engrossed in God's devotion.

To lead a good life, earning a decent sum of money is most necessary. But that should not be the goal of our life. Good thoughts, good conduct and to lead a peaceful and contented life should be the ultimate goal of our life.

The 10 gm of iron-nail will sink in water. But if 10,000 gm of iron-nails are fixed to the boat, it will surely float on the water. So what is the reason of such worry in our life? The main reason behind it is that we hold ourselves responsible for all our life's occurrences which results in our lives getting deadlocked. Therefore, Karaumi yadhyad sakalam parasmaye, Narayanayaiv samarpayami, meaning our intent should be that whatever good deeds we say and implement in our lives, we will submit those deeds at the feet of our choice deity, Lord Swaminarayan, who encompasses the deepest recesses of our body, mind and soul. If we lead our lives motivated by such supreme passion, then we are able to drive worries away and bring peace to our existence.



When Shriji Maharaj was staying with Ramanand Swami at Loj there came sadhu Shitaldas along with his guru Janakidas. They halted there for one month and then expressed the desire to go on a pilgrimage to sacred places like Dwarika. They left the holy volume (pothi) and other belongings in the Ashram at Loj under the care of the Swami. After putting the same in custody they said they would take it back on returning from the pilgrimage. Then they set out on their way to Dwarika. Their pilgrimage suffered many obstacles and breaks. They had to make halt and had to stay at many places because Guru Janakidas was not keeping good health. As he became bed-ridden they had to stay in a town for some months. The guru passed away in that town and after performing his final rites the disciples got to Dwarika to complete the pilgrimage.

The Greedy Guru - Episode at Loj

the objects, the desire to enjoy

attraction. The

more you

consume

way back from Dwarika

On his

journey

he came to Loj which was adorned by Shri Ghanshyam. He saluted Shri Hari and took a seat in the middle of the holy meeting of the saints and Satsangis. Then he asked for his sacred volume which was to be returned to him by Kothari (treasurer). On opening the volume he found a tiny tin box tightly shut and hidden inside the volume. All the eyes in the meeting spread with surprise when he opened the box. Inside the box he found a half-a-rupee silver coin and a live young serpent coiled around it. The meeting was wonder struck. Shriji Maharaj explained that the guru had to become serpent to protect the coin as a result of his greed and passion

not free from worldly attachments. Shriji Maharaj got up, took a handful of water and sprinkled it on the serpent who then got manifested! Then the guru in new form touched the feet of Shri Hari and narrated his story of lust and attachment. As per the wish of Shri Hari he went to Goloka. Then Shri Hari asked everyone present there to get rid off passions and possession because a minute passion can become the cause for next birth. If an ascetic suffered from the lust for a negligible amount of half rupee what about the worldly millionaires? Whether worldly (household) or ascetic, you should not be deeply attached to worldly objects. Neglect all tastes and become passive to its

for money. Though he was an ascetic he was

not free from the lust of money and wealth.

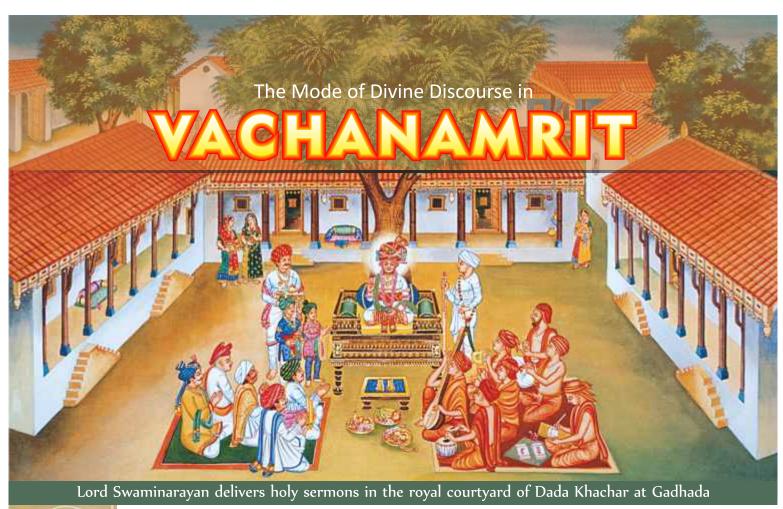
Though he wore saffron clothes and had

many disciples like Shitaldas he himself was

increases higher.

Fulfillment never comes by offering rich food to the senses, if you give offering rich food to the senses, if you give offering to Yajna-fire the flames come up higher and higher again. If slightest passion remains at the moment of death one has to take birth in gutter as a worm. May the pleasures of heaven come before you; instead of being attracted to taste and enjoy, you should consider it like a straw of grass. This sermon of Shri Hari was happily received into the heart by saints and devotees present in the meeting.

- Prof. Madhusudan Vyas, Vadodara



The most respected and the most authoritative Book in our Holy Fellowship is Vachanamrit. It forms the philosophical basis of the Holy Fellowship. Its content throws light on all the problems of life here and hereafter. Its guidance on the ethical, social, political and spiritual problems makes the reader a complete, well-informed citizen of the world. It compares favourably with Shreemad Bhagwad Geeta, the Sermon on the Mount in the Holy Bible, or the Buddhist Dhammapad.

The discussion of the issues, raised before Lord Swaminarayan is thorough. All the aspects are presented. It is not merely a series of question-answer sessions. It suggests a parallel with Plato's

Symposium or Socratic Dialogues. The questioners are not always the young ascetics in search of solution to their problems in their Sadhana. In fact, many even the largest number of questions are raised by Lord Swaminarayan Himself! It is as if the whole group is trying to see the divine truth in a joint effort.

The holy compilers and editors of this book of discourses have keen to it that the words spoken by Shreeji Maharaj are kept verbatim, the same. They were later approved by Lord Swaminarayan Himself.

Each discourse is prefixed with the minute description of the assembly, day and time, the garments worn by Lord Swaminarayan and the other prominent persons attending the discourse. This technique of description, in those days when there was no photography, helped the

reader to visualize the same as happening before his mind's eye.

There is no trace of hierarchy or superiority in Satsang displayed by Shreeji Maharaj. In fact, He guizzed His saints, sometimes with a twinkle of divine humour. Each participant would try to give his own version of the answer. The merits and validity of the answer then would be put on the anvil. Others were free to offer alternative solutions. Shreeji Maharaj would intervene only when He was requested or when there would be no unanimity in the answer. And then, we see the spark of the divine wisdom in the words that offer the permanent and all satisfying solution to the question. That question will be settled for all the time to time. The Lord and Master has spoken!

Among the Bhaktas of Lord Shree Swaminarayan there were men of all castes and creeds – Brahmins, Kathis, Kshatriyas, Bhats, Charan, Lohanas, men and women. His teachings also affected several of His Khoja muslims and Christian devotees and Harijans. His was a revolutionary religious movement of His time.

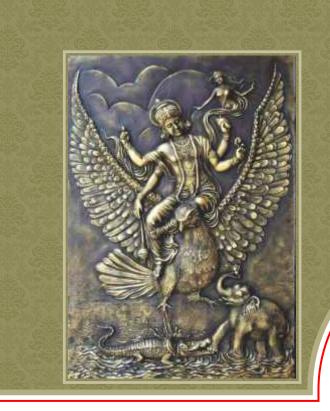
Vachanamrit is a religious and philosophical scripture, no doubt; but it can also be valued as the first treatise in modern Gujarati prose. The prose is clear, crisp and idiomatic. Some of the images presented in the discourse reflect the beauty of poetry. For example, the image of a greedy dog chewing the dry-bone that pierces his jaws that bleed. The dog sucks his own blood and thinks it comes from the dry bone! Such are the worldly pleasures.

The happiness and peace in this world

and above the ethical system of the traditional Hindu way of life lays down four modes to be practised -Dharma i.e. socio-religious duty, Vairagya i.e. non-attachment to worldly pleasures, Jnan i.e. spiritual and theosophical knowledge and Bhakti, the way of devotional surrender to the Lord. The common man would follow anyone of these in his spiritual quest. But the teaching of Lord Swaminarayan enjoins that (see Gadhada Pratham-19) all these four modes are to be practiced simultaneously for success of Siddhi in this life and hereafter. The practice of each of them supports and strengthens the seeking the achievements in others. That gives a balanced personality to the follower of the Swaminarayan Holy Fellowship.

The teachings of the Lord Swaminarayan are serious, but he did not always enjoin high seriousness among His followers. There were moments of gaiety and laughter, their feasts were real festive occasions. Of all religious beliefs, one would find the Swaminarayan saints most affable and with smiling faces. Their Vairagya sense is not allowed to make them dull and morose. It is the study of Vachanamrit that makes them smiling saints!

Prof. Rajnikant M. Pancholi
- Baroda -





There are four yugas widely accepted in Hinduism. They are: 1. Satya yuga 2. Treta yuga (Ramayan) 3. Dwapara yuga (Mahabharat) 4. Kali yuga (Present)

In Satya yuga, the fight was between two worlds (Devalok & Asuralok). Asuralok being the evil, was a different WORLD.

In Treta yuga, the fight was between Rama and Ravan. Both were the rulers from two different COUNTRIES

In Dwapara yuga, the fight was between Pandavas and Kauravas. Both good and evil elements were from the SAME FAMILY.

Kindly note how the evil is getting closer. For example, from a DIFFERENT WORLD to a DIFFERENT COUNTRY to the SAME FAMILY.

Now, know where is the evil in Kali yuga???

It is inside us. Both GOOD AND EVIL LIVE WITHIN. The battle is within us. Who will we give victory to, our inner goodness or the evil within??

I think we have gone beyond the Kali yuga also. It's the fight between the real and virtual world. Think, identify and fight. In the present time, man himself gives birth to problems and later on he becomes unhappy and he wastes his time and energy to solve those problems at last. Shri Rajendra Shukla, a great poet of Gujarat tries to prove this matter firmly in his work. The english translation of metaphor based on Gajendramoksha is given here...

Save me O Lord! with lotus in Your hand. Come down to rescue me with the sharp disc. From this struggle of myself with self. I'm the elephant and I'm the alligator.

The darkness envelops all. The directions are lost. Come as a ray of light. O Lord! Come on Your eagle's wing.

Lift me O Lord! from this mire of worldly mess. The waters are rising. In terrible eddies. I'm nearly lost, O Lord!

I am stunned. My heart has stopped throbbing. I'm in despair. And the rosary in my hand, Has stopped at the mid-bead. Come O Lord, in the form of good News Divine.

I've nothing to give O Lord! Except these tears of true repentance. They are the pearls I offer at Your holy feet!

- Translated by **R. M. Pancholi** Vadodara



Not only keeping pace with the time but taking some pathbreaking steps like publications of the first ever titanium edition of Shree Haricharitramrutsagar, a Hindi epic on Lord Swaminarayan by Sadguru Aadharanand Swami, and a 3D animated Cheshta of Shree Hari; prepared by Shree Gyanjivandasji Swami of Kundaldham. The first-ever photo-essay on Vadtaldhaam temple by Sunil Adesara; made the Kartiki Samaiyo (V. S. 2075) at Vadtaldhaam memorable. All the events were so meticulously planned and executed by Vadtaldhaam Temple Board that they became religious cultural mega events of super festivity!





Prasadi

Bhagwan Swaminarayan got constructed first ever temple in Holy Fellowship at Amdavad. Jeevabhai, a staunch devotee of village Nana Ankevadiya, got involved in the service of construction-work of the temple, leaving aside all his house-hold chores, along with his bullock and cart! The heavy stone-slabs needed for the construction of the temple, he would carry on his bullock cart from Dhangadra. Once, one of his bull's leg broke. So he changed his bull. But it didn't work. So he replaced the bull's role and he himself brought the mammoth materials to Amdavad, while chanting the Swaminarayan Mantra!

Anandanand Swami, utilizing the stone slab, got a pillar carved and placed it facing Radha-Krishna dev, in North-East corner of the temple.

After installing Nar-Narayan dev, Lord Swaminarayan warmly embraced the pillar and said, "Whenever the temple is closed for Darshan and if some one would have Darshan of this pillar, he will be blessed with the Darshan of Nar-Narayan dev." Such is the charisma, blessing and significance of this pillar!