

Gandhi's Teachers : Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta

Satish Sharma



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The Book

In the age-old tradition of a guru and disciple relationship, this work presents the life and philosophy of one of Gandhi's acknowledged gurus, the saint-philosopher Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta. The chapters describe the life of Rajchandra, Gandhi's questions from South Africa and Rajchandra's answers, Rajchandra's many influences on Gandhi, Rajchandra's Philosophy of Six Padas, and his work Atma-Siddhi (Self-Realization). A chapter has been devoted to Jainism and Jain goal of life in order for the readers to understand the philosophy of Rajchandra properly. A biographical sketch of Gandhi and his thought has been added. Established scholars and beginners in the area will find this work very useful and inspiring. The book can be used as the main or a supplementary textbook at the undergraduate and graduate levels across many disciplines.

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Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta

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Foreword

I am very pleased to write this Foreword for Professor Satish Sharma's excellent and much needed book *Gandhi's Gurus: Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta*, published by the International Center for Jain Studies of Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad. Violence is these days all over the world and at all levels of functioning, family, community, nation, and internationally. Terrorist groups are numerous and they are trying to change the face of this earth by following rigid and non-inclusive philosophies. Even the nation-states are prone to pursuing the paths of violence while resolving outstanding economic, social, and political issues and they are not willing to give peace processes a chance to work and be effective. Lots of excuses are offered for the use of violent measures at all levels and under these circumstances the whole world is being shoved into a state of turmoil and misery. No one is sincerely talking about fairness, justice, and brotherhood these days. Moral values are getting very low. Historically similar circumstances had prevailed in the past when Krishna, Mahavira, Buddha, Christ, Kabir, Nanak, and others were born to deliver the message of peace and nonviolence and lead the people to fairness, justice, and sense of brotherhood. So, the activeness of the wicked persons and the inactiveness of the noble minded persons leads towards an atmosphere of violence and animosity in the society. We need at present others like Krishna, Mahavira, Buddha, Christ, Kabir, and Nanak on the scene to teach humanity the lessons of peace and nonviolence and inculcate in them the sense of respect, tolerance, fairness, and justice.

Gandhi was one in the long line of apostles of peace and nonviolence and he is well-known for his efforts in this area worldwide. He regarded Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta as one of his first and foremost gurus and his other acknowledged gurus were Leo Tolstoy, John Ruskin, and Henry David Thoreau. Professor Sharma is right in pointing out that in spite of the immense stature of Rajchandra and the fact that Gandhi showered upon him so much respect and reverence, not much is known about this saint-philosopher of India. The present work, therefore, is pioneer in this sense and will prove invaluable for scholars and students worldwide. Rajchandra was a jain and Gandhi was a vaishnava, but true saints never feel restricted by artificial boundaries. Paramount on their mind is the search for truth and overall welfare of the society. This

was verily true of Gandhi and Rajchandra. Rajchandra was one year older than Gandhi, but he was much more spiritually advanced than Gandhi when the two met for the first time in Bombay after Gandhi completed his law studies in England and returned to India. Gandhi was first impressed by the extraordinary intellectual faculties of Rajchandra and later was even more impressed by his sincerity, simplicity and steadfast orientation to spiritual pursuits. Whenever Gandhi had a difficulty or spiritual question, he invariably confided in Rajchandra and received honest, profound, and satisfactory answers from him. In South Africa as well, when the Christian and Muslim friends were applying pressure on Gandhi to convert to Christianity or Islam, Gandhi chose to write to Rajchandra about his difficulty and again was fully satisfied by his sincere advice. Gandhi did not formally enthrone Rajchandra as his guru, but for all intents and purposes he was his most significant guide and counselor and served in this capacity until he died in 1901 at the young age of thirty-two. His untimely death was an immense loss for Gandhi and also to all other seekers of truth and peace in the world.

This book is based on a thorough research by the author for more than four years and is written extremely well. The order is logical and for one not familiar with the Indian conditions or Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain religions, sufficient background materials have been provided to ease the reading. Each chapter is extensively footnoted and bibliographical references point to the reader further reading sources. The book is written at a level that established scholars as well as beginners in the area would benefit from it. The book is being published by the International Center for Jain Studies of Gujarat Vidyapith, which is one of the best research centers of Jain Studies in the world. Those who do not know it, Gujarat Vidyapith had been established by Mahatma Gandhi himself in 1920.

I congratulate Professor Satish Sharma and the International Center for Jain Studies of Gujarat Vidyapith for their significant collaboration in the production of this work and offer the book to scholars and students in the world interested in Jain philosophy, Gandhian thought, and general topics of peace and nonviolence.

Dr. Arunkumar Dave
Vice Chancellor
Gujarat Vidyapith,

Preface

The pious land of India is star-studded with numerous saint-philosopher of the past and present, who have attempted to rid the masses of their ignorance, attachments, superstitions, and miseries and thereby have guided them to the paths of enlightenment, liberation, and happiness. The birth of such saint-philosophers has been rare, but they have appeared all over the world, through all historical times, and in both secular and religious traditions. One such saint-philosopher born in India in recent times was Mohandas K. Gandhi, popularly known as "Gandhi." Another was Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta, known as "Rajchandra," and whom Gandhi addressed as "Raychandbhai or Raichandbhai" and the "Poet."

Rajchandra was born in Vavanias in Kathiawad (Saurashtra), India in 1868, only one year before Gandhi was born. Both Rajchandra and Gandhi belonged to relatively well-to-do families, shared Gujarati culture, and had strong religious backgrounds. Gandhi met Rajchandra for the first time when he returned to India from England after completing his studies in law. Initially, the relationship between the two was that of friends, but gradually it changed into that of a teacher and a disciple. On many occasions, Gandhi sought Rajchandra's advice on religious matters and was very satisfied with his responses and the counseling he got from him. Rajchandra was a Jain¹ and Gandhi was a Vaishnava,² but they both were well-versed with the scriptures of different religions and themselves were deeply religious. Accordingly, they could converse and communicate with each other with ease on matters of religions and philosophies. Gandhi often visited Rajchandra at his place of business and was amazed to see how Rajchandra could conduct all kinds of business and yet not emotionally involve himself in any of the transactions. In his spare time, Gandhi saw that Rajchandra was always busy reading the scriptures, writing poetry, or conducting religious practices. Such daily conduct and life of Rajchandra

greatly impressed Gandhi and inspired him to be like Rajchandra. Of particular note is the advice Rajchandra gave Gandhi when he was in South Africa. Gandhi's Christian and Muslim friends had tried to convert him to Christianity and Islam respectively and under their pressure Gandhi became bewildered and confused. He started wondering if Hindu religion was really practical and workable for of his religious needs. Gandhi, therefore, corresponded with several friends in India and England and sought their advice. He also expressed his difficulties in a letter to Rajchandra and got a prompt response from him. The concluding remark in Rajchandra's response read: "On a dispassionate view of the question, I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought of Hinduism, its vision of the soul, or its charity."³ This last remark cleared all doubts of Gandhi and he decided to remain in the folds of Hindu religion in which he was naturally born. There are many other influences of Rajchandra on Gandhi, which significantly shaped Gandhi's life, thought, reform endeavors, and his desire to attain moksha⁴ and see God face-to-face.

Rajchandra might have gone largely unnoticed in India and abroad, if it were not for Gandhi's acknowledgement of him as his teacher and guide⁵ and a few of Rajchandra's admirers among the Jain community in Gujarat, India. Even with this, not much is known about this saint-philosopher and his life and thought remain practically obscure.

In America and all over the world, numerous courses are taught on Gandhi's life, thought and nonviolent strategies. Many scholars and social activists are busy researching Gandhian thought to find ways to enhance social welfare, social justice, and nonviolent cultures in the world. Readings on Rajchandra's life and thought should be imperative part of these teaching and research endeavors, but very little information is available on this topic in Indian and American libraries or elsewhere.

Main purpose of this work is to bring to the reader the much needed information on the life and thought of Rajchandra. Another particular emphasis is to make the reader

familiar with the discourses and correspondence that took place between Rajchandra and Gandhi and which had immense influence on Gandhi's life and thought in more than one way.

The undertaking of this work has been difficult, as numerous years have lapsed since the discourses and correspondence took place between Rajchandra and Gandhi and all that was in Gujarati language. Also, while Gandhi's works and speeches have been translated in most major languages of the world, only some of Rajchandra's writings are available and just a few of them have gone into Hindi or English translations. The availability of even those has been difficult. This work, therefore, has used whatever information and materials were available and does not claim to be exhaustive in any sense. The work, though, fulfills an important need and is significant.

Seven chapters and two appendixes make this work. The chapters are on Rajchandra's life, Gandhi's questions and Rajchandra's answers, Rajchandra's influences on Gandhi, the philosophy of the Six Padas, and Atma-Siddhi by Rajchandra. Information on Jainism and Jain goal of life has been included in Chapter 3, as it was deemed that without this information Rajchandra's life, thought, and his replies to Gandhi's posed questions would be difficult to understand. Two versions of the 1894 communication between Gandhi and Rajchandra have been included, one as Chapter 4 entitled "Gandhi and Rajchandra: Questions and Answers" and the other as Appendix 2 entitled "Gandhi's Questions and Rajchandra's Replies." The reader will notice that emphases in the two translations are different and therefore a comparative reading is suggested. The original communication was in Gujarati. Gandhi's brief biographical sketch has been included as Appendix 1 for general reference.

For the information and materials for this work, many sources need to be acknowledged and thanked and this has been done in different chapters and appendixes. Special mention, however, needs to be made of the Publications Division of Government of India, Navajivan Trust, and Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Parcharak Trust, as without

information and materials from these sources this work would not have been possible.

In the writing, the needs of both western and non-western readers have been kept in view and the work is presented to the reader in the same spirit of devotion and humility as Gandhi always expressed toward Rajchandra.

Satish Sharma

Las Vegas, USA

Dedicated to
My True Teacher,
My Spiritual Master

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Notes and References

Jains are the followers of Jainism. Like Hindus and Buddhists, they believe in the goal of *kevalya* (same as *moksha* or *nirvana* - see: Preface, footnote 4), but do not believe in the existence of God as creator or ruler. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.

Vaishnavas are Hindus, who worship the Vishnu deity.

Gandhi, M. K., *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments With Truth*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927, p. 114. Also see: Government of India, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. 39*. New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Navajivan Trust, 1958-84.

Moksha is a Hindu spiritual term, which means freedom from the sense pleasures and equanimity toward joys and sufferings while living and ultimately liberation from the cycles of birth and death. *Moksha* also indicates a state of self-realization, i.e. full knowledge of the soul and one primarily situated in the soul-state. The concept of *moksha* is somewhat different in Buddhism and Jainism (respectively as *nirvana* and *kevalya*), but essentially is not any different. See: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. Los Angeles: International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 1986; Radhakrishnan, S. and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in India Philosophy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957; and Rice, Edward, *Eastern Definitions*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1978.

Gandhi devoted one chapter in his autobiography to Rajchandra. He also mentioned him in some of his other writing and speeches.

Gandhi's Teachers :
Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta

Chapter 1

Introduction

Though this work is about Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta, it is also about Gandhi, his goals of life, and his nonviolent thought. Gandhi, as an ardent seeker of Truth, was always in search of wise traditions and great men so that he could model his life after them and thereby achieve perfection in life and self-realization. The goal of Gandhi was to attain *moksha*¹ and he mentions in his autobiography: "What I want to achieve - what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years - is self-realization, to see God face-to-face, to attain *moksha*. I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing, and all my ventures in the political field, are directed to the same end."² Truth, for Gandhi, was not an ordinary concept, rather it was the "sovereign principle" which included most other principles like *ahimsa*, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, non-stealing, bread labor, *swadeshi*, humility etc.³ The concept also applied to word, deed, and thought and Gandhi writes: "This truth is not only truthfulness in word, but truthfulness in thought also; and not only the relative truth of our conception, but the Absolute Truth, the Eternal Principle, that is God."⁴ Gandhi elaborates that the definitions of God are innumerable, because His manifestations are innumerable. Those definitions had overwhelmed Gandhi to the point of leaving him stunned and he wondered with awe. Gandhi, therefore, accepted God as Truth only and he states: "I worship God as Truth only. I have not yet found Him, but am seeking after Him. I am prepared to sacrifice the things dearest to me in pursuit of this quest. Even if the sacrifice demanded be my

very life, I hope I may be prepared to give it... Often in my progress, I have had faint glimpses of the Absolute Truth, God, and the daily conviction is growing upon me that He alone is real and all else is unreal."⁵

To make progress on the path to *moksha*, Gandhi firmly believed in the age-old Indian tradition of seeking a "guru" who advised the disciple on matters of daily conduct and living, achievement of perfection in life, self-realization, and attainment of the goal of *moksha*. This was a huge task and could be accomplished by one who himself was self-realized, had perfect knowledge, practiced what he preached, could guide by word and example, was pure, inspired change, was non-sectarian, was infallible, and was free from wants and flaws.⁶ Gandhi indicates: "I think there is a great deal of truth in the doctrine that true knowledge is impossible without a guru. An imperfect teacher may be tolerable in mundane matters, but not in spiritual matters. Only a perfect *jnani*⁷ deserves to be enthroned as a guru. There must, therefore, be ceaseless striving after perfection, for one gets the guru that one deserves. This infinite striving after perfection is one's right. It is also its own reward."⁸ Gandhi also believed in the potency of people and he writes in a letter to Premabehn from Yervada Mandir: "Great men seem to be the cause of revolutions in the world. In truth, the people themselves are the cause. Revolutions do not take place by accident, but obey laws as rigid as the law governing the motions of the planets."⁹

Inspirations of Gandhi came from many sources, but in his autobiography and several other writings and speeches he specifically mentions four thinkers who had captivated him and left a deep impression on his life, thought, and reform strategies. These thinkers were Gokhale, Rajchandra, Leo Tolstoy, and John Ruskin.¹⁰ In the political realm, Gandhi had accepted Gokhale as his teacher and counselor since he had met Gandhi's all expectations of a "guru" and Gandhi never doubted or questioned the propriety of his views and instructions.¹¹ In the religious realm, no one could qualify as

Gandhi's guru and Gandhi's search for one continued throughout his life. People who had come close to being Gandhi's guru in this realm were Rajchandra, Leo Tolstoy, and John Ruskin, as they had made great impression on Gandhi through their writings and exemplary lives. According to Gandhi's own ranking, the first among them was Rajchandra, a householder and a businessman who was a "seeker of Truth" and led life in the spirit of highest detachment. His influence on Gandhi was through personal contact, discourses, and correspondence Gandhi had with him from South Africa. In many ways, Gandhi attempted to model his life after his in terms of his efforts for equanimity, simplicity, diet reforms, vow of *brahmcharya*, and his determination to achieve *moksha* and see God face-to-face. When Gandhi's Christian and Muslim friends in South Africa had tried to convert him to Christianity and Islam, it was Rajchandra who had cleared Gandhi's doubts about Hindu religion and pacified him.¹²

Leo Tolstoy was second in the ranking and his influence on Gandhi was through the book *The Kingdom of God is Within You*.¹³ Gandhi understood from this book that "God's kingdom is in our hearts and that if we search it outside, we shall find it nowhere."¹⁴ Later, Gandhi also read Tolstoy's other works¹⁵ and exchanged a few letters with him. Gandhi admits that before reading Tolstoy's book, he was skeptical about many things and entertained atheistic ideas. When he went to England, he was a votary of violence, had faith in it, and none in nonviolence. After reading *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, Gandhi's faith in violence vanished and he embedded his life firmly in nonviolence.¹⁶ Gandhi was impressed by Tolstoy's life and felt that he actually lived based on what he preached. He was also impressed by Tolstoy's extraordinary simplicity and straightforwardness.¹⁷

John Ruskin was third in the ranking and his influence on Gandhi was through the book *Unto This Lost*.¹⁸ The theme of this book was that in any society each and every person was important and had to be shown due regard and consideration. Ruskin mentions that in the life of the nations material

progress did not matter much and what really mattered was how the nations treated people, served them, and whether or not national policies were geared toward their welfare and happiness. Ruskin also mentions that true wealth of a nation were not goods and services, but people. Gandhi learned from the book that welfare of the nations and of the people were conjoined and that the role and function of each person in the society was important and had the same merit. In Gandhi's own words: 1) the good of the individual was contained in the good of all people in the society, 2), a lawyer's work had the same value as the barber's, in as much as all had the same right of earning their livelihood from their work, and 3) a life of labor, i.e. the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman, was the life worth living. Gandhi knew the first of these conclusions, the second he had dimly realized, but the third had not occurred to him until he read the book.¹⁹

Even though no one could meet Gandhi's expectations of a guru in the religious realm, Rajchandra is the one who came very close to it. Gandhi admired Rajchandra and publicly acknowledged his immense debt to self. In a presidential address celebrating the birth anniversary of Rajchandra in Premabhai Hall in Ahmedabad, India in 1915, Gandhi offered the following remarks about this saint-philosopher from Gujarat:²⁰

"On my life there is such a constant influence of Rajchandra that I can not describe. I have very deep feelings for him. For years, I have been in search of highly religious people. So far, I have not found another person who could equal him. He possessed knowledge, renunciation, and devotion and was free from pretense, factionalism, passion, and jealousy. He had a divine power through which he could make full use of available contexts and opportunities. Compared to the writings of western thinkers, his writings were more penetrating, expressive, and illuminating. Among the thinkers of Europe, I place Leo Tolstoy as number one and John Ruskin as number two. However, the religious experiences of Rajchandra

surpassed those of these two thinkers... Rajchandra often said that I belong to no faction or sect, nor do I want to belong to one. All sects are limited, but overall religion has no limitations and cannot be fully described."²¹

Similarly, in a letter to H. S. L. Polak from Pretoria Jail in South Africa, Gandhi writes:²²

"...The more I consider of his life and his writings, the more I consider him to have been the best Indian of his times. Indeed, I put him much higher than Tolstoy in religious perception. The books I have read (by Rjchandra) have afforded me the highest solace. .. Both Kavi (Rajchandra) and Tolstoy have lived as they have preached. Kavi (Rajchandra), though, writes from richer experience."

Finally, Gandhi clarifies about Rajchandra as follows in his autobiography:²³

"There was no business or other selfish tie that bound him to me, and yet I enjoyed the closest association with him. I was but a briefless barrister then, and yet whenever I saw him he would engage me in conversation of a serious nature. Though I was then groping and could not be said to have any serious interest in religious discussion, still I found his talk of absorbing interest. I have since met many a religious leader or teacher... and I must say that no one else has ever made on me the impression that Rajchandra did. His words went straight home to me. His intellect compelled as great a regard from me as his moral earnestness, and deep down in me was the conviction that he would never willingly lead me astray and would always confide to me his innermost thought. In my moment of spiritual crisis, therefore, he was my refuge. And yet in spite of this regard for him, I could not enthrone him in my heart as my guru. The throne has remained vacant and my search still continues."

Rajchandra's full name was Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta and Gandhi addressed him as "Raychandbhai or Raichandbhai" and the "Poet."²⁴ He was the son-in-law of a famous businessman Popatlal Jagjivan Mehta and the brother

of Revashankar Jagjivan Mehta, the chief proprietor of an international firm of diamonds and pearls and who later became one of Gandhi's main well-wishers and life-long supporters. Gandhi was introduced to Revashankar Jagjivan Mehta by his younger brother Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, an acquaintance of Gandhi from England trained as a barrister but who continued to work in the family business and became a thriving jeweler in Rangoon, Burma.²⁵ How Gandhi first met Rajchandra was quite a coincidence.

Describing the day of his return from England in 1891, Gandhi narrates that the Arabian sea was rough as usual in June and July and it had been choppy all the way from the port of Aden. The ship had arrived late in the night. Gandhi's elder brother had come to the dock in Bombay to receive him. As it was already late, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta insisted that Gandhi and his brother should stay with them at their residence. It was there that Dr. Pranjivan Mehta introduced Rajchandra to Gandhi with the remarks that though a poet he was a partner in the family business and was a wise man of spiritual knowledge. Dr. Pranjivan Mehta also disclosed that Rajchandra was a Shatavadhani - one who could remember or attend to a hundred things at the same time. Someone suggested that Gandhi should utter some words in his presence, adding that no matter to which languages the words belonged Rajchandra would repeat them correctly and in the order spoken. Gandhi writes that at that time he was young, had just returned from England, and was proud of his knowledge of foreign languages. Therefore, he wrote many words from different foreign languages on a piece of paper and read the entire list to Rajchandra. Rajchandra, slowly and one after another, repeated all the words and in the order spoken. Rajchandra's education was very limited and that too in a Gujarati school in the vernacular languages. He had no knowledge of English or of any other foreign language. His this memory feat, therefore, was remarkable and it astonished and pleased Gandhi. Gandhi formed a high opinion of Rajchandra's memory, but did not come under its spell. The

things about Rajchandra which later really impressed Gandhi were his wide knowledge of different scriptures, his spotless character, his burning passion to achieve *moksha*, and his ambition to see God face-to-face. Rajchandra had later given up all public display of the mental powers and focused on spiritual pursuits. More than his memory feats, people around him respected Rajchandra for simple living, piety, high character, wisdom, renunciation, wide scriptural knowledge, and a burning desire for self-realization. Gandhi learned that unique memory feats and even knowledge of the *shastras*²⁶ were possible, if one worked on them. But such people were rare who also had a genuine culture of the heart, like Rajchandra did. Gandhi was also impressed by Rajchandra's independence in judgment and his freedom from all kinds of blind orthodoxy. In the worldly pursuits, Rajchandra was a connoisseur of pearls and diamonds and no knotty problem was too difficult for him, but Rajchandra's real passion was the goal of *moksha* and seeing God face-to-face.²⁷ Gandhi at the time of first encounter was twenty-two and Rajchandra was twenty-three years old.²⁸

Rajchandra could combine with ease his business dealings and religious practices and he actually lived according to what he believed in. Himself a Jain, Rajchandra's knowledge and toleration of other religions was really remarkable. He had limited schooling, but knew Sanskrit, Magadhi, and perhaps Pali and he had acquired knowledge of Islam, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism through Gujarati sources. Among the articles on his table at the business place were several religious books and a diary. The moment he finished his business transactions with customers, he would open one of the religious books or started writing in his diary. The writings sometimes produced poetry, at other times prose, and still at other times inspiring spiritual songs.²⁹ Rajchandra also responded to the inquiries of his admirers and wrote letters to them to resolve their spiritual dilemmas. Gandhi writes that the man who immediately upon finishing his talk about weighty business dealings, could begin reading or writing

about hidden things of the spirit could hardly be a business man. Rather, such a feat could only be accomplished by one who was a "seeker of Truth." Gandhi saw Rajchandra absorbed in spiritual pursuits, not once or twice, but numerous times.³⁰

Rajchandra, indeed, lived the life of a *karamyogi*.³¹ He was equipoised and on his lips were often the following lines of Muktanand:³²

"I shall think myself blessed,
only when I see Him in every one of my daily acts;
verily he is the thread,
which supports Muktanand's life."

Rajchandra's influences on Gandhi have been described in a later chapter. He sincerely tried to guide Gandhi through the knotty problems and in his spiritual pursuits.

Notes and References

1. See: Preface, footnote 4.
2. Gandhi, M. K., *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments With Truth*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927, p. x.
3. Simply put, *ahimsa* is nonviolence, *brahmacharya* is celibacy, non-possession is voluntary poverty, non-stealing is using only what belongs to self, bread labor is earning a living through own hard work, and *swadeshi* is that which belongs to self or is present in the region or nation. These are, however, simple translations of the terms. The meanings of the concepts are much deep in the Indian tradition and references are to physical, mental, and spiritual goals as well as to word, action, and thought processes.
4. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*..... op. cit., 1927, p. xi.
5. Ibid.
6. These requirements of a guru are found in several writings and speeches of Gandhi. Gandhi had read Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship* and therefore also referred to

guru as a "hero," thereby meaning one worthy of reverence, a God-like. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 45. New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Navajivan Trust, 1958-84, p. 95. Also see: Gandhi, *An Autobiography*..... op. cit., 1927; Gandhi, M. K., "Foreword," in *Shrimad Rajchandra* by Mansukhlal Mehta. Bombay: Revashankar Zaveri. 1935.

7. *Jnani* is one who is self-realized and knows all through perfect spiritual knowledge.
8. Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 39...op. cit., 1958-84, p. 76.
9. Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 45...op. cit., 1958-84, p. 95.
10. Occasionally, Gandhi also mentions Henry David Thoreau as his teacher and guide, but not on the same level as Rajchandra, Leo Tolstoy, or John Ruskin. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 45... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 95.
11. In a speech delivered on September 10, 1928 on the birth anniversary of Leo Tolstoy. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 37... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 261.
12. See: Gandhi, *An Autobiography*..... op. cit., 1927; Gandhi, "Foreword"... op. cit., 1935; Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 37...op. cit., 1958-84.
13. Tolstoy, Leo, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.
14. Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 37... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 261.
15. See, for example, Tolstoy, Leo, *What Men Live By*. White Plains, New York: Peter Pauper Press, Undated; Tolstoy, Leo, *Where Love Is, There is God Also*. Brookings, Oregon: Sandpiper Press, 1987; Tolstoy, Leo. *The Law of Violence and The Law of Love*. New York: Concord Grove Press, 1983.
16. Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 37... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 262.

17. Ibid.

18. See: Ruskin, John, *Unto This Last*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1967; Gandhi, M. K., *Ruskin's Unto This Last: A Paraphrase*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1956; Wilmer, Clive, *Unto This Last and Other Writings by John Ruskin*. New York: Penguin Books, 1985.

19. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*..... op. cit., 1927, p. 250. Gandhi, later, translated John Ruskin's book into Gujarati under the title *Sarvodaya*. *Sarvodaya* is also available in English. See: Gandhi, M. K., *Sarvodaya*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1951. Also see: Gandhi, *An Autobiography*..... op. cit., 1927, p. 75; Govt. of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 37...* op. cit., 1958-84, p. 261.

20. Adopted from a Hindi version of the speech. See: Goverdhandas, Brahmachari, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji: Questions Answered*. Ahmedabad: Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, 1989, p. i.

21. The original remarks were delivered on November 21, 1915. On November 23, 1915, *The Bombay Chronicle* reported these remarks as follows. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 13...* op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 143-44:

"Dealing with the life of Rajchandra, Mr. Gandhi mentioned that he had come in close contact with him and, so far as he was competent to judge, he declared it to be his deliberate opinion that the deceased (Rajchandra) was one of the best religious philosophers of modern times in India. He was incomparable in true perception, he was free from attachment, and had true *gyana* (knowledge), *vairagya* (detachment), and *bhakti* (devotion) in him. He followed no narrow creed. He was a universalist and had no quarrel with any religion in the world. In the West, the speaker had found Tolstoy and Ruskin among the best philosophers and he did not hesitate to put the deceased (Rajchandra) above both of them. The deceased (Rajchandra) outdid them in religious

experience. The faith of the deceased (Rajchandra) was a robust faith, such as could only be based on the true realization of the self. Upon the speaker's own life, the deceased (Rajchandra) had exercised a very powerful influence. There was a suitable and certain sublimity and genuineness about the writings of the deceased (Rajchandra), which gave them particular charm and enabled them to have a powerful hold upon the reader.

22. This letter was dated April 26, 1909. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 9...* op. cit., 1958-84, p. 213.
23. Gandhi, *An Autobiography.....* op. cit., 1927, pp. 74-75.
24. For consistency, "Rajchandra" has been used throughout the text.
25. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 13...* op. cit., 1958-84, p. 143, footnote; Gandhi, *An Autobiography.....* op. cit., 1927.
26. *Shastras* are scriptures.
27. Gandhi, *An Autobiography.....* op. cit., 1927, pp. 73-75; Gandhi, "Foreword"... op. cit., 1935.
28. Ibid.
29. In a letter to Jaisukhlal by Gandhi dated November 3, 1945, there is a reference to a song by Rajchandra with the theme "innocent joy may be derived from anywhere." In a letter to Chhotubhai by Gandhi dated January 3, 1947, there is another reference to a song by Rajchandra with the theme "for a liberated person, the state of mind cannot be affected even in dire circumstances or at the moment of death." Gandhi adds that Rajchandra used to sing this later song often when he was 20-21 years old. Some of Rajchandra's songs were included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* and sung by residents of Gandhi *Ashrams* in their daily prayers. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vols. 17 & 86...* op. cit., 1958-84, respectively p. 17 & p. 303. Most of the published writings of Rajchandra are reproductions from his diary or of letters. See: Gandhi, *An Autobiography.....* op. cit.,

1927, pp. 73-75.

30. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*..... op. cit., 1927, pp. 73-75; Gandhi, "Foreword"... op. cit., 1935. Also, see a short article by Gandhi entitled "*A Great Seer*," published in the June 1930 issue of *Modern Review* and reproduced in Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 43... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 98-99.
31. *Karmayogi* is one who while discharging properly worldly duties remains fixed on the spiritual goals.
32. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*..... op. cit., 1927, p. 74.

Chapter 2

The Life of Rajchandra

Rajchandra, as has been mentioned before, was born in 1868 in Vavana in Kathiawad (Saurashtra), India. His father was a Vaishnava,¹ named Ravjibhai. The mother was a devout Jain² and her name was Devabai.³ Rajchandra was very bright and he imbibed the religious spirit of his family at an early age. When still young, the grandfather took Rajchandra to guru Ramdas, who initiated him as a Vaishnava by putting a *kanthi*⁴ around his neck.⁵ Little did the guru or others know that the boy later would not believe in such rituals and would repudiate all unscrupulous superstitions.⁶

Rajchandra had a close boy friend, named Amichand. He died of a snake-bite and this incident brought to Rajchandra an awareness of the phenomenon of life and death for the first time. Amichand's corpse was taken to the cremation ground and burned on a pyre according to the Hindu rites.⁷ Rajchandra hid himself in a nearby tree and watched all. He was shocked and saddened to see the body of his dear friend being burned. Strangely, this incidence put Rajchandra in a deep reflective mood. The veil of ignorance suddenly lifted from his inner sight and he was able to see his previous births and eventual death in this life. This was an eye-opening experience for a boy at age seven.⁸ Later, at age twenty-five, Rajchandra wrote the following note in his diary:⁹

"One should not doubt the narrations about previous births of great persons, which are recorded in various scriptures. By developing one's psychological power, it is feasible to look into one's previous births. There is nothing imaginary in it. To deny the possibility of experience in

previous birth is, as if, he (one) had not the knowledge of the soul."

When of school-age, Rajchandra was admitted into a Gujarati school, where he received his education in vernacular languages. He was smart and surprised both his teachers and classmates through his brilliance and extraordinary capacity to learn the lessons quickly. He finished all junior level classes (first four grades) within a two-year period. At age thirteen, he was sent to Rajkot to study English language, but was called back to help his father in the business. Rajchandra also had a chance to go to England for higher studies, but chose not to go.¹⁰

Rajchandra's religious yearnings had started at an early age. The main influence in this regard was his mother, who was a deeply religious woman and practiced all kinds of Jain vows. The family, when Rajchandra was young, lived in a neighborhood where other Jain families also lived. This gave Rajchandra an ample opportunity to interact with the Jain families and learn about their way of life. He was impressed by the rational thought behind Jainism and the kindly way of life of the Jain families. This was also the time when Rajchandra began a deep study of Jainism and comparative study of other religions. He discussed his spiritual problems with the learned people he could find and felt that no other religion had advocated the ideals of love, harmony, and renunciation so scientifically and so in-depth, as Jainism had.¹¹ Later, he wrote:¹²

"Jainism has such sacred theories in itself that one may end his life contemplating even upon one of them and still remain far from reaching the conclusion. Compared to the ocean of nectar of spiritual morality propounded by the omniscient Lord Jinendra, all other religions seem not even like drops in it. One who understood Jainism and followed it, would become nothing but unattached and omniscient. How sacred personage its propounder was? How intact, perfect, and compassionate are His doctrines? There is no fault in them. It is only Jainism, which is quite infallible.

There is not a single truth which may be unknown to Jainism. It is only Jainism, which proclaims an object full of innumerable aspects. Nowhere there is a truth so purposeful as this. As there can be no two souls in one body, so there can be no two Jainisms throughout the world, i.e. there is no other philosophy comparable to Jainism. What is the cause for saying so? Nothing but its perfection, non-attachment, truth, and universal benevolence."¹³

Though Rajchandra was very proud of Jainism, he felt that the tradition and its philosophy had fallen into improper hands of the *vanias*.¹⁴ *Vanias* interpreted Jainism in a *vania* spirit¹⁵ and thus encouraged ignorance instead of knowledge, cowardice instead of courage, and indifference instead of compassion.¹⁶ Gandhi writes: "The Poet (Rajchandra) used to say that had Jainism not fallen into the hands of those who are called Jains, it would have filled the world with marvel at its truths. But, the fact is that the followers bring discredit to the truths of Jainism."¹⁷

When twenty years old, Rajchandra was married to Jabakbai, the talented daughter of Popatlal Jagjivandas Mehta, the younger brother of Revashankar Jagjivandas Mehta.¹⁸ Rajchandra had some children from this marriage,¹⁹ but his soul was constantly hankering after self-realization and the attainment of *moksha*. His heart was full of renunciation, no matter what he did. Rajchandra took his marriage to be result of his past *karmas*²⁰ and led the life of an ideal householder. A verse in Gujarati was often on his lips, which meant: "There is a constant fruition of the *karmas*. Engrossed in the desire for accumulation of materialistic gains, I have committed so many deeds. As much as I try to compensate this desire, the further it increases, it does not diminish in the least."²¹

Rajchandra started composing poetry in Gujarati language at the tender age of eight. It has been indicated that he had rendered the entire texts of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*²² in verse form within an year's time.²³ Rajchandra was a born-poet and he wrote from rich inner experiences.²⁴ Gandhi

writes:²⁵ "One rare feature of his (Rajchandra's) writings is that he always set down what he had felt in his own experience. There is in them no trace of unreality. I have never read any line by him which was written to produce an effect on others... The poem about the "supreme state"²⁶ must have been written in that manner." Gandhi also found great solace in Rajchandra's writings and letters²⁷ and he wrote:²⁸ "I have always felt that Rajchandra's writings breathe the spirit of truth. He did not write a single word in order to show off his knowledge. His aim in the writings was to share his inward bliss with his readers. I am sure that anyone who wishes to free himself from inner conflicts and is eager to know his duty in life will gain much from Rajchandra's writings, whether such a reader is a Hindu or belongs to another faith."

Rajchandra was a person of sound principles and some of the cornerstones of his life were a detached attitude, self-reflection, following of *ahimsa* in all walks of life, and constant search for Truth.²⁹ About Rajchandra's *ahimsa*, Gandhi writes:³⁰ "His (Rajchandra's) *ahimsa* was not of the crude type we witness today among its so-called votaries who confine their attention merely to the saving of aged cattle and insect life. His *ahimsa*, if it included the tiniest insect, also covered the whole humanity." Gandhi was in close contact with Rajchandra for two years after his return from England and he visited him frequently at home, at the place of business. He found Rajchandra always in a detached mood in the spirit of *vairagya*.³¹ Whatever Rajchandra was doing, whether eating, resting, lying in bed, or conducting his business, he was not interested in the things around and particularly was not tempted by pleasure objects or material luxuries of the world. Gandhi watched his life from close quarters and saw that Rajchandra accepted whatever he was served for the meals, his dress was a simple *dhoti*,³² a *kurta*,³³ an *angarakhun*,³⁴ and a turban of cotton yarn and mixed silk. These garments were not even strikingly clean or ironed carefully. It was the same for Rajchandra whether he squatted

on the ground or had a chair to sit on. In the shop, he sat on a *gaddi*.³⁵ He used to walk slowly and anyone could easily see that he was deeply absorbed in his own thoughts. He was free from any sign of impatience or anxiety and paid a single-minded attention to his affairs. There was a strange shine on his face, power in his eyes, and he looked like an embodiment of peace. The face was round, the lips thin, the nose neither pointed nor flat, and the body was slim-built and of medium size. The skin was dark. There was such sweetness in his voice that one simply wanted to keep on listening to him. The face was smiling and cheerful and it depicted inner joy of the soul. Rajchandra had a ready command of the language and Gandhi did not see him ever pausing for a word to express his thoughts or change a word while writing a letter. Yet, the reader could not tell that any thought was imperfectly expressed or the construction of a sentence was defective or the choice of a word was faulty. These qualities, Gandhi believes, could exist only in a man of self-realization and perfect self-control.³⁶ Rajchandra conducted his household and business affairs with a clear-minded attention, an attitude of renunciation, and with constant focus on the ultimate goal of *moksha*. The following verse by Shamal Bhatt applied well to Rajchandra's affairs:³⁷

"He is a true *vanik*,³⁸ who never speaks an untruth;
He is a true *vanik*, who never gives short measure;
He is a true *vanik*, who honors his father's words;
He is a true *vanik*, who returns the principal with interest;

Good sense is the *vanik's* measure, and the king's measure his credit; Should the *vania* (*vanik*) neglect business, suffering like a forest fire spreads far and wide."³⁹

Rajchandra's business of diamonds and pearls was in partnership with Revashankar Jagjivan Mehta. In addition, he had a cloth shop. Gandhi says that in his business dealings Rajchandra displayed utmost vigilance and was very successful. He could judge the worth of diamonds and pearls with great accuracy. Even without any knowledge of English

or other foreign languages, he was quick to follow general substance of the received letters and telegrams from foreign agents and took little time to see through their intentions. He was never impatient and did not worry about the business matters. Gandhi watched him deal with his customers and his impression was that Rajchandra was always upfront in the dealings and the terms and conditions were firm and clear. If the other party tried to be "clever" with him, Rajchandra saw through it instantly and would not tolerate such behavior. On such occasions, he used to knit his brows and one could see a flash of redness in his eyes.⁴⁰ In the unscrupulous money-making world, Rajchandra was very scrupulous. He did not get swayed by material gains and would forego a profit if he felt that the deal was likely to harm the other party. The customers wondered at this attitude, but appreciated Rajchandra's sense of kindness.⁴¹

Rajchandra met all the demands of his household and businesses and yet vigorously pursued his spiritual goals. He meditated inwardly on the self, as spontaneously and continuously as the breathing. On his lips were often the lines of the long poem which he had himself composed.⁴² Some lines of this poem expressed:⁴³ "When will such an opportunity come that I may become a nirgrantha⁴⁴ in inner and outer behaviors. After cutting the bonds of attachments, when will I walk on the path shown by the great personages." Rajchandra walked successfully on the double-edged sword of living a worldly life and simultaneously seeking liberation for the soul. He was a true *mumukshu*⁴⁵ and once wrote in his diary:⁴⁶ "Do your business in a spiritual manner and maintain unattached attitude. Do whatever is necessary for it. As far as possible, do not annoy the person you have to deal with and should your renunciation be unpleasant to him, part with him without harming him in any way, benefiting him to your utmost capacity, and nursing such desire forever for the future." People around Rajchandra asked him how he could live the life of an ideal householder, conduct his businesses, and at the same time so vigorously engage in self-realization.

His reply was:⁴⁷ "Oh, there is nothing difficult in it. It is quite simple, just like sitting under the shadow of a tree. One who sits under the cooling shade, does not get attached to it and does not remain sitting under it. Similar is the case with worldly sojourn and its affairs." With this inward attitude, Rajchandra was able to live a simple, kind, and renounced life. Gandhi, and other seekers like him, used to visit Rajchandra with spiritual questions and in search of self knowledge. While engaged in his business dealings, Rajchandra used to discuss with them their spiritual questions and advise them on religious matters. Being a *Shatavadhani*⁴⁸, he could afford to do so.⁴⁹

Rajchandra became a profound thinker and a great teacher of the Jain philosophy through his penance, scriptural studies, and self-reflections. He had many admirers and some of them wanted to follow in his footsteps. Gandhi also was greatly impressed by Rajchandra and had a deep respect for his compassion for others and all-round attitude of nonviolence. Gandhi also believed that Rajchandra had gained an inner vision through which he could discriminate between soul and matter.⁵⁰ Even then, Gandhi did not adopt him as his *guru*⁵¹ because he believed that Rajchandra had not yet attained "perfect" self-realization needed for *moksha*⁵² and he was not yet a *jivanmukta*.⁵³ Rajchandra's judgments and opinions, however, appealed to the moral sense of Gandhi and he trusted his views in vast majority of the cases.⁵⁴ Gandhi writes:⁵⁵ "Yet, I never could regard Rajchandra as a perfect man. But, of all the men I know, he appeared to me to be nearer perfection than the rest. Alas, he died all too young, when he felt that he was surely going to see Truth face-to-face." At another place, Gandhi writes:⁵⁶ "I had very close relations with Rajchandra. I do not think that he followed Truth and nonviolence with greater devotion than I, but I do believe that he far surpassed me in knowledge of the scriptures and retentiveness of memory." Gandhi also writes:⁵⁷ "He (Rajchandra) had self-knowledge and self-confidence from his childhood. I know that he was not a *jivanmukta* and he

was himself conscious that he was not. But, he was fast progressing in that direction."

Rajchandra fell seriously ill toward the end of his life and Gandhi believes that he had exacted more work from his body than he should have to meet the demands of his household and businesses. Rajchandra had explained to Gandhi that the body was on a hire and the duty of each person was to make most of it and try to attain *moksha* as quickly as possible. For this goal, he also advised that one should forsake all attachments and bravely tackle the obstacles in the path.⁵⁸ Gandhi, accordingly, wondered how did then Rajchandra took upon himself excessive responsibilities that brought upon him a severe illness? His conclusion was that Rajchandra too was temporarily overcome by spiritual ignorance (*maya*-illusionary energy), as explained in the Bhagvad-Gita:⁵⁹ "All creatures follow their basic nature, what will then the constraint avail?" Gandhi took Rajchandra's taking on of excessive responsibilities as a sign that he was not yet a *jivanmukta* and that he had some subtle attachments left in him. Rajchandra had also said that it would be impossible for anyone to deceive a person of perfect spiritual knowledge and yet people occasionally cheated Rajchandra on religious or other pretexts. This was another indication for Gandhi that Rajchandra was not yet a fully self-realized person.⁶⁰ Gandhi explains that *moksha* is a state of grace for the *atman*,⁶¹ the achievement of which requires ceaseless effort through many lives. A genuine *vairagya* is the first step of a yearning for *moksha* and one also had to get rid of all attachments in this very life. Gandhi explains that Rajchandra possessed the needed *vairagya*, a strong yearning for *moksha*, and freedom from attachments was spontaneous in him. He also had a happy combination of the moral life and spiritual knowledge needed for *moksha*. But he was not yet a *jivanmukta*. Gandhi felt that despite some subtle attachments left in him, Rajchandra was close to achieving the goal of *moksha* and that he had not observed in anyone else such a beautiful combination of moral life, spiritual yearning, practical

discharge of duties, and devotion to *dharma*,⁶² as he had seen in Rajchandra.⁶³

When Rajchandra was lying on his deathbed in extreme agony, he was not mindful of his extreme pain and only eagerly awaited a vision of God.⁶⁴ The admirers of Rajchandra started asserting that he was a *muktapurusha*⁶⁵ and the twenty-fifth *tirthankar*.⁶⁶ Gandhi tries to clarify that such a belief was not proper and that either those who held the belief did not know Rajchandra's life or their definition of a *tirthankar* was different from the one commonly accepted. He advises that we may not lower the standard of truth, even for the sake of those whom we dearly love. *Moksha*, he explains, is a condition of supreme value and the highest state of the *atman*. This state is so rare and the attainment of the state needs much effort and patience through many lives. A *tirthankar* commands the powers of this state immediately preceeding *moksha*.⁶⁷ One who has attained this state while still living in the body is a *muktapurusha* and will not suffer from attachment or bodily diseases.⁶⁸ In a body untroubled by desire, there can be no disease. There can be no disease, where there is no attachment. Where there is desire, there is attachment, and while there is attachment, *moksha* is impossible. Gandhi, accordingly, concludes that Rajchandra had not yet attained full freedom from attachments and diseases and therefore was not a *muktapurusha* or a *tirthankar*. Such *vibhuti*,⁶⁹ he says, belongs only to a *muktapurusha*. Gandhi, nevertheless, adds that Rajchandra had spiritual powers and divine glory in much larger measure than most ordinary folks have and that he was close to being a *muktapurusha*. Gandhi concludes by saying:⁷⁰ "We are all worldly creatures and shall have to wander from existence to existence, whereas Rajchandra may have only one life more to live... This was no small achievement. Even so, I must say that he had not attained the supreme state, so beautifully described by him. He himself said that he had come upon the Shahara in his journey and that he had failed to cross the desert."

Rajchandra was a rare human being, a prominent Jain

philosopher, and a true teacher and guide for many. He has left behind a rich spiritual legacy, that shines to this day. His life was exemplary and he served as a role model to many seekers of Truth, including Gandhi. His writings were profound and have provided solace to those who seriously sought self-realization. Anyone who looked up to his example, found that it was easier to control worldly yearnings, avoid sense-pleasures, live a life away from bodily needs, and devote concertedly to the spiritual pursuits.⁷¹

Rajchandra passed away in 1901 at the age of thirty-two. Gandhi at that time was in South Africa and learned about his death there. The letter of condolence written by him has been included in the footnotes to this chapter.⁷²

Notes and References

1. See: Preface, footnote 2.
2. See: Preface, footnote 1.
3. Marriages in those days between Vaishnavas and Jains were common in Gujarat, India.
4. *Kanthi* is anything worn around the neck, but in this case also of religious significance.
5. The ritual is similar to baptism in Christianity and is performed when the child is still of a young age of under five years or so. Similar rituals exist in Islam, Judaism, and other faiths.
6. Goverdhandas, Brahmachari, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji: Questions Answered*. Ahmedabad: Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, 1989. p. 1.
7. In some religious traditions, the dead body is buried. But, according to Hindu rites, it is cremated.
8. Gandhi seems to have been aware that Rajchandra had achieved self-realization (*atmajnana* - the knowledge of the soul) at an early age of seven or so. In a letter to Manjula Gandhi dated July 26, 1944, he declares that age is not a factor in the achievement of *atmajnana*, as was the case for Rajchandra. See: Government of India, *The*

- Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 77. New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Navajivan Trust, 1958-84, p. 424. Also see: Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 9, 1958-84, p. 418.
9. Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...*op. cit., 1989, p. 1.
 10. Ibid., pp. 2-3; Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 43... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 98-99.
 11. Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...*op. cit., 1989, pp. 3-4.
 12. Ibid., p. 4.
 13. As noted in the earlier chapter, this positive attitude of Rajchandra toward Jainism did not affect his appreciation and tolerance of other religions.
 14. *Vanias* are members of the Vaishya community, who traditionally engage in trade and commerce. In the Hindu tradition, the society was divided into four grades of people: 1) Brahmans (teachers and spiritual leaders), 2) Kshatriyas (warriors and administrators), 3) Vaishyas (businessmen and farmers), and 4) Shudras (artisans, manual workers, and servants) - see: Hutton, J. H., *Caste in India*. London: Oxford University Press, 1963; Srinivas, M. N., *Caste in Modern India and Other Essays*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962; Beteille, A., *Caste, Class, and Power*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971 ; Mandelbaum, D. G., *Society in India*, Vols. I & II. Berkley: University of California Press, 1970. Also see: Sen, K. M., *Hinduism: The World's Oldest Faith*. Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1961; Embree, A. T., *The Hindu Tradition: Readings in Oriental Thought*. New York: Random House, 1966; Zaehner, R. C., *Hinduism*. London: Oxford University Press, 1966; Flood, G., *An Introduction to Hinduism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
 15. What Rajchandra means here is that the *vanias* interpreted Jainism in more functional than ideal terms and thus diluted the tradition and its philosophy.

16. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 21, 34, & 54... op. cit., 1958-84, respectively pp. 427-35, p. 23, & p. 201.
17. A speech on the birth anniversary of Rajchandra. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 21... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 427-35. Also see: *Navajivan*, November 24, 1921; *Harijanbandhu*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 1933.*
 *Because of Rajchandra's averse statements about Jainism, some Jains used to say that he knew nothing of *Jain Dharma* (Jainism) and that he was a hypocrite and egotist. Gandhi, however, assures that there was not a trace of hypocrisy or egotism in Rajchandra. See: *Navajivan*, November 24, 1921.
18. Earlier in Chapter 1, it has been indicated that Revashankar Jagjivandas Mehta was one of Gandhi's main well-wisher and life-long supporters.
19. In a letter to Jaisukhlal dated November 3, 1945, Gandhi makes a reference to Rajchandra having a son. It is possible that he may have had other children as well. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 82, 1958-84, p. 425.
20. The understanding of present life to be the result of past *karmas* (doings) is common in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. The *karma* theory, however, is not the same in these three traditions. See: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. Los Angeles: International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 1986; Radhakrishnan, S. and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957; Rice, Edward, *Eastern Definitions*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1978. Also see: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life. Since Rajchandra's primary goal was the attainment of *moksha*, family and business lives were more like obstacles for him.
21. Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...* op. cit., 1989, p. 5.
22. *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are huge Hindu epics,

written in about sixth century B.C. These are important parts of the Hindu scriptures. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957.

23. Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...* op. cit., 1989, p. 2.
24. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 9 & 43... op. cit., 1958-84, respectively p. 213 & pp. 98-99. Also see: *Modern Review*, June 1930.
25. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 6.
26. This was a long poem composed by Rajchandra at age eighteen. The translated version of a couple of the verses is as follows (See: Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 6):

"When shall I know that state supreme,
When will the knots, outer and inner, snap?
When shall I, breaking the bonds that bind us fast,
Tread the path trodden by the wise and the great?
Withdrawing the mind from all interests,
Using this body solely for self-control,
He desires nothing to serve any ulterior and of his own,
Seeing nothing in the body to bring on a trace of the
darkness of ignorance."

A prose version of this poem was included in *Ashram Bhajanaavali* and recited by residents of Gandhi's *Ashrams* in their daily prayers. The text was as follows (See: Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 44... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 463-465):

"When will the matchless time come, so that I would be rid of all knots external and internal? When will I give up all the subtlest ties and go the way the great sages have gone? Would that I was indifferent to all the moods and that the body was used merely for self-restraint, that there was nothing to bind me for any cause imaginable and that I had no illusions about the body. Would that I should gain knowledge that comes from removal of obstruction in the path of perception, that I regarded body as separate from

the soul and that I had recognition only of the soul. Would that obstruction to right conduct too was removed and there was concentration on pure self. Would that there was steadfastness of the three *yugas* (temporal phases of the life of the universe) running practically to the time of death and that steadfastness was incapable of being shaken by suffering however great. Would that even the yoga was only for attaining greater restraint over the self and that there was implicit obedience to the precepts of the *Jina* (propounder of Jainism) for the sake of the soul. Would that even that activity also perceptibly decreased and I was absorbed in self-realization. Would that there were neither likes nor dislikes in matters received through the senses and that I was unaffected by their play. Would that I engaged in activities that came to me in due course and was enslaved by time, place or circumstances. Would that I was angered against anger and that against respect paid to me I had humility enough not to be affected by it. Would that in respect of *maya* (illusionary energy) I was but a witness to its blandishments and against ambition I had ambition to thwart it, I had no anger against even the extreme wrong-doers and had no pride if an emperor paid respects to me, that I was unmoved even if the body perished and had no desire even for the greatest gifts. That I was the same to friend and foe alike as towards praise or insult, that there was indifference in me whether I lived or died, that even regarding the cycles of birth and death or salvation I had only the simple natural state that I had crossed the alluring ocean of different temptations and was intent upon the state where all passions were quenched, and that at the time of death I would shed all desire and had perfect knowledge, that all the four kinds of activities were to me like a burnt hope - mere ashes, that I was living out only this life and that after that there was no more birth. That I had no desire for even an atom, that I was sinless, immovable and intent upon self-realization, that I was absorbed in the spotless, eternal

everlasting, neither small nor big, formless self-acting Being, that owing to past actions I was fit for the abode of the released - where there is eternal bliss, perfect perception and perfect experience. This is the state which the all-knowing *Jina* (propounder of Jainism) realized but could not describe. How can any other person describe it? It is capable only of being experienced. I shall set my heart upon that state though it may be at present beyond my capacity. Nevertheless Rajchandra is determined that God willing he will attain it."

27. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 9... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 242. Some writings and letters of Rajchandra were published in Gujarati. See: Mehta, Mansukhlal, *Shrimad Rajchandra*, Bombay: Revashankar Zaveri, 1935.
28. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 32... op. cit., 1958-84,
29. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 3, 13, 39, & 43... op. cit., 1958-84, respectively p. 230 footnote, pp. 307-308, pp. 74-76, & pp. 98-99. Also see: *Kathiawar Times*, November 12, 1916.
30. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 43... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 98-99. Also see: *Modern Review*, June 1930.
31. *Vairagya* indicates constant focus on the spiritual goals and therefore lack of interest in worldly goals, relationships, and affairs.
32. *Dhoti* is similar to *sari* for Indian women, but of a shorter length.
33. *Kurta* is a loose Indian shirt.
34. *Angarakhun* is a tight-fitting coat of thin cloth, fastened with laces.
35. *Gaddi* is a thickly-padded cushion.
36. Based mostly on Gandhi's own description of Rajchandra. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 6-7. Also see: Gandhi, "Foreword"... op. cit., 1935.

37. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 8.
38. *Vanik* is same as *vania*. See: Chapter 2, footnote 14.
39. The mood in this verse is similar to that of Muslim *sufi* tradition. For a basic understanding of the influence of this tradition on Hinduism, see: Sen, *Hinduism...* op. cit., 1961; Embree, *The Hindu Tradition...* op. cit., 1966.
40. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 8-9.
41. Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...* op. cit., 1989, pp. 5-6.
42. See: Chapter 2, footnote 26.
43. Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...* op. cit., 1989, p. 3. Also see: Chapter 2, footnote 26.
44. *Nirgrantha* is without worldly knots.
45. *Mumukshu* is the seeker seeking *kevalya*, *nirvana*, or *moksha*. Also see: Preface, footnote 4.
46. Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...* op. cit., 1989, p. 6.
47. *Ibid*, pp. 6-7.
48. *Shatavadhani* - one who could remember or attend to a hundred things at the same time. See: Chapter 1.
49. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 8-9; Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...* op. cit., 1989, pp. 5-6.
50. Goverdhandas, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandraji...* op. cit., 1989, p. 3; Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 28... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 403.
51. Gandhi, *An Autobiography.....* op. cit., 1927, p. 75.
52. See: Preface, footnote 4.
53. *Jivanmukta* is a fully self-realized and liberated person in this very life.
54. *Modern Review*, June 1930.
55. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vol. 43... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 98-99.
56. In a letter to G. D. Birla dated March 30, 1925. See:

- Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 26... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 436.
57. Ibid.
 58. Gandhi, "Foreword"... op. cit., 1935, pp. 9-11.
 59. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita...* op. cit., 1986 (Chapter 3, Shloka 33).
 60. Gandhi, "Foreword"... op. cit., 1935, pp. 9-11.
 61. *Atman* is self or soul.
 62. *Dharma* refers to duties and responsibilities relative to one's worldly and spiritual life.
 63. Gandhi, "Foreword"... op. cit., 1935, pp. 9-11.
 64. Ibid.
 65. *Muktapurusha* is the same as *jivanmukta*.
 66. *Tirthankar* are the founders of the Jain path and are perfectly self-realized souls (*jivanmuktas*). They exemplified and taught Jain way to others. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, p. 250-271. Also see: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
 67. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 1-2.
 68. These are Gandhi's views that a *jivanmukta* or *muktapurusha* is totally free from physical diseases. Others may not accept this view.
 69. *Vibhuti* is divine glory.
 70. Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, p. 2.
 71. Ibid, pp. 1-2.
 72. Gandhi's reaction to the news of Rajchandra's death is summarized in his condolence letter dated May 21, 1901 to Revashankar Jagjivandas Mehta (the original was in Gujarati). See: Government of India, *The Collected Works...* Vols. 3... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 230-231.

14 Mercury Lane,
Durban,
May 21, 1901

Respected Revashankarbhai,

Mansukhlal's letter brought me news of the passing away of Kavishri (Rajchandra). I also saw it later in the papers. It was hard to believe the news. I can't put it out of my mind. There is very little time in this country to dwell on any matter. I got the letter while I was at my desk. Reading it, I felt grieved for a minute and then plunged immediately into my office work. Such is life here. But, whenever there is a little leisure, the mind reverts to it. Rightly or wrongly, I was greatly attached to him and I loved him deeply too. All that is over now. So, I mourn out of selfishness. What consolation can I then give you?

Respectfully yours,
Motandas

Chapter 3

Jainism and Jain Goal of Life

In Chapter 2, the life of Rajchandra has been briefly described and the forthcoming chapters will present some aspects of Rajchandra's thought and the answers he provided to Gandhi's posed questions from South Africa. These topics are deeply rooted in Rajchandra's life as a Jain¹ and his efforts at seeking *moksha*² through the Jain path. A basic knowledge of Jainism and Jain goal of life, therefore, is essential in order to properly follow Rajchandra's thought and his teachings.

Jainism is a primordial religion and in some respects it predates the Hindu Vedic tradition.³ There are references of the Jain practices and of *tirthankars*⁴ in the Vedas and in Hindu scriptures like *Vishnu Purana* and *Bhagavata Purana*. The relics of the Indus Valley Civilization⁵ also indicate the presence of religious practices similar to the Jain practices and it is therefore likely that some form of Jainism has existed all along and the tradition may be older than the Hindu Vedic tradition. But, in its present form, Jainism is of a later origin and is dated between 599-527 B.C.⁶

Jainism and Buddhism were born as reactionary responses against some corruptive practices in Hinduism, which included manipulative control of people by Hindu priests, excessive ritualism, animal sacrifices, and occasionally human sacrifices. Both Jainism and Buddhism condemned such practices and emphasized that people should move away from formal priesthood and ritualism of all kind. Both religions also emphasized nonviolence in all walks of life, though they did not directly acknowledge any Super Power and did not accept the authority of the Vedas for guiding peoples' lives

and the religious practices. The pursuit of spiritual goals and achievement of *moksha* were left up to the individual, without help or mediation by a priest or a guru. Eventually the Jain and Buddhist traditions became a threat to the Hindu tradition and inspired changes in it. Current emphases on vegetarianism and nonviolence in the Hindu tradition are examples of such changes and there were many more. The Hindu tradition, in turn, impacted Jainism and Buddhism and made them look like itself over the centuries, in spite of the differences in beliefs, ideologies, and religious practices. Buddhism also impacted the shaping of Jainism in some significant ways.⁷

The term "Jain" means to conquer and it is derived from the Sanskrit root "ji." "Jina" is a conqueror. However, the conquering is not of other people or lands, but it is of inner ignorance, impurities, and passions.⁸ The *tirthankars* were such conquerors or Jinas and they are the ones who laid down the path of Jainism. The Jain tradition recognizes twenty-four *tirthankars*, among whom Rshabha was the first in the hoary past of India and he is regarded as the original founder of Jainism. The second and third *tirthankars* were Ajitanatha and Arishtanemi and they are mentioned in the Yajur Veda. Other *tirthankars* are mentioned in different Jain texts, leading up to Parshva and Mahavira, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth *tirthankars*. Parshva had died 250 years before Mahavira appeared. Mahavira⁹ lived between 599-527 B. C. and he is the one who is credited with the organization and systematization of the Jain tradition by pulling together the doctrines and teachings of earlier *tirthankars*. Mahavira was born in Bihar and he was an older contemporary of Buddha. There were many similarities between Mahavira's and Buddha's lives and teachings. Both belonged to the warrior caste, were born in the same region, and both opposed Vedic ritualism, animal sacrifices, blind faith in religious practices, and control of people by the priests. Both were against caste system and preached that the primary goal of life was to escape the cycles of birth and death and attain *moksha*. One branch of the Jain tradition believes that Mahavira was

married and had two children. The other branch believes that he was a celibate. Mahavira left his home at age thirty to seek *moksha*. He wandered along the Gangetic plains and found enlightenment after twelve years of penance and austerities. He preached for another thirty years and died at the village of Pava in Bihar, not far from his birthplace. Jainism and Buddhism did not gain much popularity until late into the 4th century B.C., when Emperor Chandragupta became a Jain patron and passed his last years of life as a Jain monk. Later, his grandson Ashoka adopted Buddhism and spread the tradition throughout India and abroad in countries like Ceylon, China, Japan, Burma, Cambodia, and other oriental nations.¹⁰

Jainism and Buddhism originated as alternative faiths to Hinduism and were supposed to be simple and free from ritualism, blind faith, and domination of the priests. However, with the passage of time and through interaction with the Hindu tradition, priesthood and image-worship gradually crept in and became a part of the traditions. In the Jain tradition, there were movements against priesthood and image-worship in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and an effort was made to return the tradition to its earlier simpler form. These movements proved to be ineffective. Also, Mahavira had left no guidance for or against the building of temples and iconic veneration. The Jains erected *stupas*¹¹ and adorned them with Jain images and sculptures of *tirthankars* who were represented nude and with downcast eyes. Besides such veneration, other rites also developed and became a part of the Jain tradition. One such rite was *pooja*¹² of Jain images and of *tirthankars*. The Jains also started worshipping a number of Hindu gods and Jain prayers referred to all kinds of holy men, including *arahantas*, *siddhas*, *acharyas*, *upadhyayas*, and *sadhus*¹³ of different traditions. The invocation to these holy men was made four times as a prayer by pointing to the four directions as indicated on the compass. One important Jain festival was *pajjusana*, where people fasted, lived briefly like monks, men and women made

confessions of sins, begged forgiveness of each other, and began the new Jain year in peace, love, and kindness toward one another. Some Jain practices looked quite like Hindu practices. The Jains, for example, observed similar ritualistic regulations concerning purity and defilement, performed similar ablutions, and recited similar *mantras* in *pooja* and prayers. The ceremonies of marriage, death, and so on were also similar. Orthodox Jains did not take food between sunset and sunrise, had no anniversaries in honor of the dead, and did not use ashes on their foreheads. In their eating habits, Jains abstained from all kinds of meat and some fruits and vegetables as well, which in their estimation encouraged passion. Vegetables that grew in bulbous shape with stalks or similar shaped roots (e.g., mushrooms, onions, eggplant, garlic) were forbidden. Rice, milk, milk products, lentils, and beans were common in diet and Jains strained water as not to hurt any living creatures. Monks wore masks over the mouth and nose as not to breathe in and kill minute living beings. A faith which wanted people to be free of blind faith, ritualism, and domination of the priests, ultimately became itself obsessed with many of these features.¹⁴

The Jain tradition later split into two branches: the *digambaras*¹⁵ and the *shvetambaras*.¹⁶ Both branches followed the same *angas*,¹⁷ currently eleven in number.¹⁸ The *digambaras*, however, challenged the authenticity of the *angas* and they insisted on total nudity for the monks. Women were prevented from entering the monastic order, which was the highest calling in Jainism. The females also had very little role to play in formal religious observances and the *digambaras* insisted that no women could attain *moksha*. The *shvetambaras* believed in the authenticity of the *angas* and women could join the monastic order on a limited basis. *Shvetambara* monks were dressed in white clothes, orthodoxy among them was less, and women had a better position in the order. The *digambaras* are more numerous in South India. The *shvetambaras* are more numerous in North India, with the largest concentrations in the States of Gujarat and Rajasthan.¹⁹

The well-known concept of *ahimsa*²⁰ and austerities as a way for self-realization and achievement of *moksha* originated in the Jain tradition and are now part of the Hindu and Buddhist practices. Hinduism also owes to the Jain tradition for vegetarianism and similar other concepts. Jainism also played a part in the growth of medieval mysticism. Ramamuni is one example of a famous Jain mystic and his work *Pahuda Doha* is an example of simple mystic poetry of the Middle Ages. Other saint-philosophers from the Hindu and Muslim traditions also contributed to medieval mysticism and significant names in this regard are Khwaja Moinuddin Cishti, Ramananda, Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, Mirabai, Rajjab, and others. Medieval mysticism played an important role in the enrichment of Indian thought and culture and the development of *bhakti* movement²¹ in Hinduism is an example of such enrichment.²²

Jainism is guided by the core concept of *ahimsa* and Jains were the first to make it an integral part of daily living and of spiritual pursuits. *Ahimsa* is nonviolence in thought, word, and deed, in all aspects of life, at all times, under all circumstances, and without any qualifications or conditions. The concept also applies to all creatures, from the largest to the tiniest ones. Accordingly, *ahimsa* is practiced not only in relation to other human beings, but also in relation to living and non-living beings and Jainism believes that even a stone is a living being with a soul and one-sensed life based on the feeling of touch. The concept of *ahimsa* also includes the concept of *karuna* - all-inclusive mercifulness and the concept of *kshama* - unconditional forgiveness. In no other tradition, the concept of *ahimsa* has been defined and applied so comprehensively as in Jainism.²³

Fundamental concern in Jainism is about the entangled state of the soul and how to free it from the cycles of birth and death and attain *moksha*. In its original form, the soul is pure, enlightened, and free. However, with the impact of *karmas*,²⁴ it becomes vulnerable and gets wrapped with *karmic matter*.²⁵ The goal is to free the soul from *karmic matter*, so that it may

literally rise into the perfect state of *moksha* where it enjoys infinite perception, infinite knowledge, infinite power, and eternal bliss. The Jain path makes the soul shed *karmic matter* gradually. When all *karmic matter* has been shed, the soul becomes free from the cycles of birth and death and *moksha* is achieved. Enlightened self-interest, freedom from emotions, freedom from dependence on others, being neither pleased nor annoyed with life, being without desires, being without worldly possessions, and voluntary rejection of the pleasures are to be sought to shed *karmic matter*. "There is no need to tell a man who sees for himself in this regard, but the wretched fool delighting in pleasure has no end to his miseries, but spins in a whirlpool of pain," points out a Jain saying.²⁶ Consequently, the ideal is a passionless man, who relinquishes his ties of wealth, love, family, and friends to concentrate on the liberation of the soul.²⁷

All living and non-living beings are in different stages of transmigration, depending upon the *karmas*. Only gradually the soul moves upward into higher stages and achieves liberation or *moksha* eventually. The struggle to free the soul from *karmic matter* is continuous and relentless. There is no help or mediation available of a Super Power or a guru and all a person can do is follow the path shown by the *tirthankars*. Initially, the person has to strive for self-restraint and self-discipline,²⁸ until the flow of *karmas* is reversed and the soul begins to shed what it had accumulated of *karmic matter*. The individual also must practice austerities and not every person is ready for this. *Karmas* are gradually burned up in the glow of the austerities and practices like fasts, showing reverence to superiors, and rigid control of senses, speech, and intellect are some examples of the austerities. Confession of faults and good will towards one another are binding. After the stage of liberation is attained, the person is fully enlightened and can live temporarily in the world to serve humanity, no longer afflicted by the demands of good and evil. In the final stage of *moksha*, the soul transcends the world, having dropped behind all *karmic matter* and having attained the perfected

state. The *Uttaradhyayana Sutra* indicates: "completely purged, the soul takes the form of a straight line, goes in a simple moment, without touching anything and taking no space, goes upward to *akasha*,²⁹ and there takes its natural form, obtains perfection, enlightenment, deliverance, and final beatitude, and puts an end to all the misery."³⁰

The whole universe is made up of *jivas* and *ajivas*. *Jivas* are conscious and animate beings. *Ajivas* are non-conscious and non-living beings. *Jivas* have souls and bodies and the soul is distinct from the body. The body is composed of *tattvas* or the material elements, is *ajiva*, and is just connected to the soul. *Ajivas* are classified into two groups: *arupa* - those without form (e.g., *dharma* - principle of motion, *adharma* - principle of rest, *akasha* - principle of space, and *kala* - principle of time) and *rupa* - those with form (e.g., *pudgala* or matter). For every *jiva* in the universe, Jainism says that there are five *ajivas*. Both *jivas* and *ajivas* are from the very beginning and they are independent, uncreated, and eternal.³¹ The structure of the universe is atomic in nature.³²

Life is pervasive and the whole universe throbs with life. There is life even in supposedly inanimate objects. A simple stone has life, as it has a soul to which is tightly enchained a material body. When kicked, the stone suffers pain. The same way, all living beings in the universe suffer pain, including animals, fish, birds, trees, insects, rocks, minerals, and others. All have life and all feel pain. "In every kind of existence, I have suffered pain, which has scarcely known reprieve," says a Jain verse.³³ Jains, therefore, emphasize *ahimsa* toward all living and non-living beings, in the whole universe, and in all aspects and phases of life. *Ahimsa*, therefore, is an endless struggle to avoid annihilation of even the most rudimentary forms of life. Jains believe that soul of each creature must be reborn one million times (eight of these in human form) on the path to *moksha*. Even gods must experience life as people 400,000 times. Daily life of a Jain, accordingly, is an unending effort to prevent destruction of other creatures in whatever shape and grade they may come. Daily effort is also

directed at getting rid of the debts of past *karmas* in the previous lives.³⁴

The creatures are classified into five categories according to the number of senses they possess. The highest beings have five senses and gods, men, beings in hell, and some higher animals fall in this category. The five senses they possess are hearing, sight, taste, smell, and touch. In addition, gods, men, beings in hell, and some higher species (e.g., monkeys, cattle, horses, elephants, parrots, pigeons, and snakes) also possess intelligence. The second category of beings have four senses of sight, taste, smell, and touch. Flies, wasps, and many other large insects are in this group. The third category of beings are smaller insects with the three senses of taste, smell, and touch. Ants, fleas, and various bugs and moths are in this group. The two-sensed creatures have only taste and touch. Worms, leeches, shellfish, and similar other creatures are the examples. The fifth category of beings have one sense only, of touch. Here, we find trees, shrubs, vegetables, earth-bodies,³⁵ water-bodies,³⁶ and wind-bodies.³⁷ The *Sutrakritanga* indicates that everything has a soul, earth, water, fire, wind, grass, trees, plants, and all creatures that are born of the egg, of the womb, of dung, and of liquids - "know that they all seek freedom and happiness. In hurting them, men hurt themselves and will be born again among them." Even a flame has a soul and may be reborn later as a human being. Additionally, all things in the universe suffer through the cycles of birth and death and need release from karmic matter. So, the advice is "live with self-control.....subduing both anger and fear." Self-control is necessary for one's *moksha*.³⁸

Consciousness is the essence of the soul, with perception and intelligence as its manifestations. The former is simple apprehension and the latter is conceptual knowledge. Basically, things are extramental realities. As light reveals itself and other objects simultaneously, so does *jnana* (knowledge) reveal itself as well as others. Thus, soul knows itself and other objects concurrently. The five sources of

jnana are: 1) *mati* - ordinary cognition, which includes memory, recognition, and induction, 2) *shruti* - knowledge derived through signs, symbols, and words, including the processes of association, attention, understanding, and *naya*,³⁹ 3) *avadhi* - direct knowledge of things at a distance in space or time, 4) *manahparyaya* - direct knowledge of the thoughts of others, and 5) *kevala* - perfect knowledge, that is all-comprehensive and all-inclusive. The first three of these are liable to an error, but not the last two. In its pure state, the soul is both *jnana* and *darshana* - perfect knowledge and perfect intuition. In an impure state, the soul carries disturbing media, passions, and emotions, which cause the inflow of *karmic matter* and prevent the soul from exercising its natural functions in full measure as well as achieving the all-blissful state *moksha*. Through effort and by living according to the Jain teachings, the soul can shed off *karmic matter* and attain *moksha*. The difference between the souls is in terms of the degrees of their connection with *karmic matter*.⁴⁰

Knowledge is either of the thing as it is and in itself - the logic of "direct proof" or *pramana*, or of a thing in its relation to other things - the logic of "point of view" or *naya*. *Nayas* are seven in number and they give knowledge of a thing from seven points of view in relative terms. The *nayas* are: 1) somehow a thing is, 2) somehow it is not, 3) somehow it both is and is not, 4) somehow it is indescribable, 5) somehow it is and is indescribable, 6) somehow it is not and is indescribable, and 7) somehow it is, is not, and is indescribable. This is the *saptabhangi*⁴¹ scheme of Jain logic or seven "modes" or "points of view." Through this scheme, observations and judgments are used in seven different ways to discriminate the qualities and propensities of an object. *Syadvada*,⁴² in addition, aims at conditional prediction with a view that all knowledge is only probable and partial. It amounts to the assertion that whatever it is, when assessed through *saptabhangi nayas*, its knowledge is only relative and the thing is liable to express itself in multiple forms, with the result that no absolute prediction is possible. This doctrine

is known as *anekantvada*, meaning that reality is "many-sided" and not "one-sided," thus suggesting the possibility of one relative prediction at a time.⁴³ In Jainism, accordingly, one finds no absolute affirmations or negations of the things, for the nature of reality is considered to be too complex to be exhausted in any simple definite prediction. All predictions only present a certain "point of view."⁴⁴

Jainism contends that the universe is grounded in logic and experience and that the truths propounded in Jainism are in accordance with the existing reality. Scholars concur and point to the distinguishing contributions of Jainism as: 1) its classification of beings, 2) its theory of knowledge, 3) its doctrines of *saptabhangi* and *syadvada*, and 4) its *ascetic ethics*. The philosophical system of Jainism is both simple and complex. On the one hand, it resembles the most primitive animistic practices and on the other it qualifies as one of the most lofty analytical, metaphysical, and theological standards. The basics are easy to understand and practiced widely by the followers. The higher and more complex teachings are meant for monks, ascetics, and teacher-philosophers. The practical ideal and practice in Jainism vary, but prescribed goal of *moksha* is for everyone.⁴⁵ The Jain path to the deliverance of the soul and attainment of *moksha* is through the three "jewels" of right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct. Belief in real existence in soul form and in *tattvas* (the material elements) is right faith. Knowledge of real nature of the soul, without doubt or error is right knowledge. The practice of five virtues - *ahimsa*, truth-speaking, non-stealing, chastity, and non-attachment to worldly things - is right conduct.⁴⁶

Notes and References

1. See: Preface, footnote 1.
2. Jainism and Buddhism use the terms *kevalya* and *nirvana*. However, *moksha* has been used here as a generic term. See: Preface, footnote 4.

3. Hinduism is based on the Vedic tradition. This tradition has been attributed to the Aryans, who arrived in India between 1700-1200 B.C. "Veda" means knowledge and there are four Vedas. Rig Veda and Sama Veda are collections of hymns. Yajur Veda is a collection of sacrificial formulas and Atharva Veda is a collection of charms and magical formulas. Together, they are also known as Samhitas. For thousands of years, Vedas were orally passed on from one generation to the next and were put into writing in much recent times. See: Rice, Edward, *Eastern Definitions*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1978, p. 392. Also see: Radhakrishnan, S. and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957; Sharma, C., *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987.
4. *Tirthankars* are the founders of the Jain path. They were fully self-realized souls, whose teachings later became the Jain tradition. Also see: Chapter 2, footnote 66.
5. The Indus Valley Civilization refers to the Mohenjodaro and Harappa archaeological remains discovered in 1921. The excavations indicate the existence of a highly developed civilization in India between 3000-1700 B. C. This civilization had peaked before the "Aryans" immigrated to India from the northwest frontiers. See: Leonard, K. I., *The South Asian Americans*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997, pp. 3-5.
6. Rice, *Eastern Definition...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 193-194.
7. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 193-194. For more detailed information on Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism as well as their interactive impacts, see: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957; Sharma, *A Critical Survey...* op. cit., 1987; Jaini, J., *Outlines of Jainism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916; Mehta, M. L., *Outlines of Jain Philosophy*. Bangalore: Jain Mission Society, 1954; Tatia, N., *Studies in Jain Philosophy*. Banaras: Jain Cultural Research,

- 1951; Humphreys, C., *Buddhism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951; Bhattacharya, V., *The Basic Conception of Buddhism*. Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1934; Murti, T. R. V., *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1955; Hamilton, C. H., *Buddhism in India, Ceylon, China, and Japan*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931.
8. Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism all believe that worldly and spiritual problems are rooted in people's ignorance, impurities, and passions. Once ignorance, impurities, and passions are conquered, self-realization and *moksha* become possible. See: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. Los Angeles: International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 1986; Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957; Organ, T. W., *The Hindu Quest for the Perfection of Man*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University, 1970; Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, *The Teachings of Buddha*. Tokyo, Japan: Kosaido Printing Co., 1996.
 9. Mahavira's original name was Vardhamana. He was the son of Siddhartha, the chief of a warrior clan of the Jnatikas in what is now northern Bihar. "Mahavir" means great hero and he is mentioned in some Buddhist scriptures as Nigantha Nataputta or "the naked sage of the Jnatika clan." See: Rice, *Eastern Definitions ...* op. cit., 1978, p. 241.
 10. Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, p. 250; Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 194-95; Sen, K. M., *Hinduism: The World's Oldest Faith*. Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1961, p. 64.
 11. *Stupas* are Jain temples.
 12. *Pooja* is ritualistic worship.
 13. *Arahantas*, *siddhas*, *acharyas*, *upadhyayas*, and *sadhus* are all holy people, fully self-realized or on the path to self-realization.
 14. Rice, *Eastern Definition...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 198-199.
 15. *Digambara* means sky-clad or naked. *Digambaras* consider themselves to be the followers of original Jain

tradition and claim that *shvetambaras* (see: footnote 17 below) do not follow original teachings of the *tirthankars*. This split in Jainism is similar to the one in Buddhism in terms of the *Hinayana* and *Mahayana* traditions. See: Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 166, 195, 242-243.

16. *Shvetambara* means white-clad or those who wear white clothes.
17. *Angas* are Jain doctrines, literally meaning the "limbs" of Jainism.
18. *Angas* were passed on from one time period to another through the oral tradition and were lost at one point. A general council of the Jain monks was held at Pataliputra (now Patna, India) to reconstruct the *angas* from memory. Only a partial of the canons could be recalled at that time and those are eleven in number. See: Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 195.
19. Sen, *Hinduism...* op. cit., 1961, p. 65; Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 195.
20. Simply put, *ahimsa* is nonviolence. However, the intended meaning is much deeper. See: Chapter 1, footnote 3.
21. Sen, *Hinduism...* op. cit., 1961, pp. 91-96; Rice, *Eastern Definition...* op. cit., 1978, p. 57; Sharma, S., "The Bhakti Movement in India." *Popular Culture Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1999, pp. 111-122; Goswami, S. D., *Vaisnava Behavior: The Twenty-Six Qualities of A Devotee*. Port Royal: Gita-Nagri Press, 1983.
22. Sen, *Hinduism...* op. cit., 1961, p. 65, pp. 97-102; Embree, A. T., *The Hindu Tradition: Readings in Oriental Thought*. New York: Random House, 1966, pp. 261-270.
23. M. K. Gandhi has been credited with the most comprehensive application of the concept of *ahimsa* in recent times in his political struggle against the apartheid system in South Africa and relative to the freedom movement in India. See: Gandhi, M K., *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments With Truth*.

- Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927; Gandhi, M. K., *Satyagraha in South Africa*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1928. Also see: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957; Sen, *Hinduism...* op. cit., 1961.
24. As Chapter 2, footnote 20 has indicated, *karma* conception is different in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita ...* op. cit., 1986; Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957; Zaehner, R. C., *Hinduism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966; Carus, P., *Karma/Nirvana: Two Buddhist Tales*. La Salle, Illinois: The Open Court Publishing House, 1973; Zaehner, R. C., *The Concise Encyclopedia of Living Faiths*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1959; Parrinder, G., *World Religions: From Ancient History to the Present*. New York: Facts on File Publications, 1971.
 25. *Karmic matter* is literally a wrapping around the soul, caused by *karmas*. It is composed of *karmic particles* - a kind of elastic and metaphysical glue. These particles are extremely subtle and actually make an opening to infiltrate the soul. Though literally a substance, *karmic particles* can not be detected by the senses. After *karmic particles* flow into the soul, they create a bondage by forming *karmic molecules* and settle down to form their own body. This body weighs down the soul and becomes a hindrance in its liberation. After death, *karmic particles* continue to linger with the soul, until its final liberation or *moksha*. See: Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 197-198.
 26. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 197.
 27. Ibid, pp. 193, 197.
 28. Self-restraint and self-discipline are initial steps for achieving *moksha* in most other religious traditions as well. The *yoga* system in Hinduism, for example, prescribes practical discipline and then lays down the eight-fold path for liberation of the soul as follows:

- abstention, observance, posture, breath-control, withdrawal of the senses, fixed attention, contemplation, and concentration or *smadhi*. The first two of these refer to ethical prerequisites for the practice of *yoga*, including practice of nonviolence, truthfulness, honesty, continence, non-acceptance of gifts, internal and external purity, contentment, austerity, and devotion to God. Posture is a physical aid to the concentration. Breath-control is for serenity of mind. Abstraction of the senses from their natural functions is to help keep the mind still. Only after these initial steps are properly perfected, that the last three steps of fixed attention, contemplation, and concentration or *smadhi* become possible. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, pp. 453-454.
29. *Akasha* is sky and simultaneously the reference is also to the spiritual sky.
 30. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 197-198. Also see: Mookerjee, S., *The Jaina Philosophy of Non-Absolutism*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978; Kalghatgi, T. G., *Jaina View of Life*. Sholapur: Jaina Samskriti Samraksaka Sangha, 1984.
 31. Unlike Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity, Jainism does not believe in any Super Power and does not admit that *jivas* and *ajivas* were created by anyone at anytime.
 32. Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, p. 251; Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 197-198. Also see: Jain, G. R., *Cosmology: Old and New*. New Delhi: Bharatiya Jnanpith, 1975.
 33. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 196.
 34. Ibid.
 35. The earth and all things found in the earth, such as clay, stones, minerals, oil, metals, and jewels.
 36. From a drop of rain to ponds, rivers, and oceans.
 37. All gases and all types of winds.
 38. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 196-197.
 39. *Naya* is logical and inherent meaning of the things. It is also "point of view," such as of observation, perception,

analysis, or application.

40. Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, pp. 250-251.
41. *Saptabhangi* is seven-fold.
42. *Syad* means "somehow", "perhaps", "maybe", or "in a certain sense." *Syadvada*, therefore, refers to relative observation, perception, analysis, and application.
43. Some other philosophical systems suggest the opposite view, known as *ekantavada*, meaning that the essential reality is "one-sided." See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, p. 261.
44. Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, p. 260-262. This source also indicates that an excellent understanding of Jain logic and metaphysics is provided in *Syadvadamanjari* by Mallisena, a 13th century commentary on the famous Jain work *An Examination of Thirty-Two Stanzas of the Doctrine of Other Systems* by Henachandra. Also see: Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 196.
45. Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, p. 250; Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 196.
46. In comparison with Jainism, Buddhism stresses the "Four Noble Truths" and the "Eight-fold Path." The "Four Noble Truths" are: 1) the noble truth of suffering, 2) the noble truth of the cause of suffering, 3) the noble truth of the annihilation of suffering, and 4) the noble truth of the path leading to the annihilation of suffering. The "Eight-fold Path" is: right understanding, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right endeavor, right mindfulness, and right concentration. See: Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 143 ; Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957, pp. 251, 274-275. Also see: Carter, J. R. and M. Paliawadana, *The Dhamapada*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987; Cleary, T., *Dhamapada: The Sayings of Buddha*. New York: Bantam Books, 1995.

Chapter 4

Gandhi and Rajchandra : Questions and Answers

This chapter presents Gandhi's posed questions to Rajchandra from South Africa and Rajchandra's responses to them from India. The context was Gandhi's extreme bewilderment when some of Gandhi's Christian and Muslim friends tried to convert him respectively to Christianity and Islam. Here is what transpired.

After finishing his studies in England, Gandhi returned to India in order to practice law and settle in the Gujarat province of India. Gandhi had little knowledge of Hindu and Muslim laws and the judicial system in India was corrupt. On these counts, Gandhi failed at practicing law. A Meman firm from Porbandar, Gujarat offered Gandhi the job of a legal assistant for one year at that time to help in their long-standing case in South Africa. Gandhi accepted the offer and soon started for South Africa.

Upon arrival in South Africa, Gandhi was received by Abdulla Dada, also known as Abdulla Seth. Abdulla Dada was a rich merchant and owner of Abdulla Dada and Co. He had retained a White attorney, Mr. A. W. Baker, to take care of the legal affairs of his firm. It was Mr. Baker who first tried to convert Gandhi to Christianity by emphasizing that it was impossible for anyone to find salvation unless one accepted Jesus as "the only son of God" and "the Savior of mankind."¹ Mr. Baker recommended that Gandhi should abandon his Vaishnava² Hindu religion and become a Christian. Later, Mr. Coates and the Plymouth Brethren, other Christian friends of Gandhi, also tried to convince Gandhi that salvation for him would be impossible unless he accepted Christianity and that

his sins would get washed away only through the intercession of Jesus.³ One of the Plymouth Brethren confronted Gandhi like this:⁴

"You cannot understand the beauty of our religion. From what you say it appears that you must be brooding over your transgressions every moment of your life, always mending them and atoning for them. You can never have peace. You admit that we are all sinners. Now look at the perfection of our belief. Our attempts at improvement and atonement are futile. And yet redemption we must have. How can we bear the burden of sin? We can but throw it on Jesus. He is the only sinless son of God. It is His word that those who believe in Him shall have everlasting life. Therein lies God's infinite mercy. And as we believe in atonement of Jesus, our own sins do not bind us. Sin we must. It is impossible to live in this world sinless. And therefore Jesus suffered and atoned for all the sins of mankind. Only he who accepts His great redemption can have eternal peace. Think what a life of restlessness is yours, and what a promise of peace we have."

Gandhi felt pressured by the arguments of his Christian friends, but he did not convert to Christianity. He indicated that he would think over the matter and needed time. He, however, felt that the definition of religion presented by the Christian friends was somewhat narrow and resolved that if this be the Christianity acknowledged by all Christians then he would not accept it. Gandhi told his friends that he did not merely seek redemption from the consequences of his sins, but redemption from the sins themselves and the very thought of sins. Until this goal was attained, he was content to be restless.⁵

Gandhi had difficulty accepting that Jesus was the *only* son of God and that He was the *only* source for redemption from the sins and salvation. Gandhi admitted that though born a Hindu, he did not have enough knowledge of his own religion, much less of other religions, and that he was not certain what his religion should be. He promised that he would make a

careful study of different religions and then reach a decision. In the meantime, he was determined that he would not embrace another religion until he fully understood his own.⁶

Mr. Baker later took Gandhi to the Wellington Convention where Protestant Christians were meeting for three days. Gandhi observed the behavior of the participants and was impressed by the faith and devotion of the congregation. Yet, he did not find any reason to convert to Christianity. He still had difficulty about the proposition that he would go to heaven and attain salvation only by becoming a Christian and that Jesus was the only incarnated son of God and only one who believed in Him would have an everlasting life. Gandhi argued that if God could have sons, then all of us were his sons. If Jesus was God-like, then all men were God-like too. Gandhi did not believe that Jesus literally by his death redeemed the sins of the whole world. He accepted that Jesus was an embodiment of sacrifice, a martyr, and a divine teacher. But he could not convince himself that Jesus was the most perfect man ever born. His death on the cross was a great example to the world, but he could not accept that there was anything mysterious or miraculous about the death of Jesus. The pious lives of Christians also did not reveal to Gandhi more that the lives of pious men from other religions had not revealed. Gandhi also had difficulty accepting that only human beings had souls and not other living beings for whom death meant complete extinction. Gandhi's beliefs were to the contrary, as suggested by the teachings of other religions. From the point of view of sacrifice, it seemed to Gandhi that Hindus and others had surpassed the Christians. In light of these doubts and reflective thoughts, it was difficult for Gandhi to regard Christianity as the greater of other religions or a perfect religion.⁷

Gandhi also had doubts about the suitability of Hindu religion for his spiritual needs. Hindu religion practiced untouchability and accepted caste and sect divisions. Gandhi considered the practice of untouchability as a grossly unjust tradition and a blemish on the Indian culture. He did not

understand why there had to be multitudes of castes and sects with prescribed duties and behaviors.⁸

This was also the time when Muslim friends were putting pressure on Gandhi to convert to Islam, indicating that their was the truer path and a certain way to heaven and salvation.⁹ Bewildered, Gandhi wrote letters to friends in London and India and expressed his difficulties. He also corresponded with the religious authorities in India and received responses from them. One of the letters he wrote was to Rajchandra, his early friend and associate in India. Rajchandra wrote him back and it was his reply that pacified Gandhi and relieved him of the mental turmoil. In the closing remark, Rajchandra had written: "On a dispassionate view of the question, I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought of Hinduism, its vision of the soul, or its charity."¹⁰ Rajchandra advised Gandhi to be patient and study Hinduism more deeply. Gandhi later wrote as follows about the whole ordeal:¹¹

"In the year 1893, I came into close contact with some Christian gentlemen in South Africa. Their lives were pure and they were devoted to their religion. Their main work in life was to persuade followers of other faiths to embrace Christianity. Though I had come into contact with them in connection with practical affairs, they began to feel solicitude for my spiritual welfare. I realized that I had one duty: that until I had studied the teachings of Hinduism and found that they did not satisfy my soul, I should not renounce the faith in which I was born. I, therefore, started reading Hindu and other scriptures. I read books on Christianity and Islam. I carried on correspondence with some friends I had made in London. I placed my doubts before them. I entered into correspondence with every person in India in whom I had some trust, Rajchandra being the chief among them. I had already been introduced to him and a close bond had grown between us. I had respect for him, and so I decided to get from him everything he could give. The result was that I gained peace of mind. I felt

reassured that Hinduism could give me what I needed... Since Rajchandra was primarily responsible for the above result, my respect for him increased manifold."

Gandhi needed at that time more than anything and Rajchandra provided him amply was the hope and assurance and that if one practiced higher ethics and morality demanded by a religion, *moksha*¹² was possible in this very life.¹³ Rajchandra sent Gandhi several books to read. One of those books, *Mumukshuprakarana of the Yoga Vasishtha*, indicated to Gandhi that a strong sense of human endeavor (*purushakara*) was necessary in order to face the difficulties in this world and self-examination of experiences was necessary at every step on the path to *moksha*. Gandhi, henceforth, turned action-oriented and made himself a *mumukshutva*.¹⁴ Gandhi also read *Panchikaran*, *Maniratnamala*, *Shaddarshana Samuchchaya*, *The Perfect Way*, *The New Interpretation of the Bible*, and *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. Regarding the last book, he later remarked that "before the independent thinking, profound morality, and truthfulness of this book, all the books given to me by Mr. Coates seemed to pale into insignificance."¹⁵

Gandhi continued his correspondence with Rajchandra throughout the latter's lifetime and received guidance from him from time to time on comparative study of religions and his soul searches. The correspondence included in this chapter took place in 1894 in Gujarati language.¹⁶ Gandhi asked the questions in a mood of confusion and bewilderment and Rajchandra answered them through his vast knowledge of the religious philosophies and deep self-reflections.

The following were the questions and answers:¹⁷

Q. 1 What is a soul and what are its functions? Do the karmas¹⁸ bind it?

A. (1) Just as pot, table etc. are material substances, similarly a soul is a conscious substance. But pots, tables etc., all material substances, are transient and impermanent. They cannot remain static in their nature through all the ages: past, present, and future. While on the other hand, soul retains all

its characteristics because it is permanent and eternal. "Eternal" is that substance which is not created by the processes of integration and disintegration. There is nothing to show that soul has been created by any such processes. We may make thousands of combinations and permutations of material objects, but it is impossible to create consciousness. It is common experience that if a particular characteristic is wanting in a substance, it cannot be created by undergoing it through innumerable combinations and permutations. Thus material objects like pots, tables etc., which are devoid of consciousness, can never be made to yield consciousness whatever way they are changed or processed. All these things will only result in producing objects of the same materialistic order. It is thus established that soul, which is characterized by the wise as a conscious substance, cannot be created from material objects like earth, water, air, and space etc. The particular characteristic of soul is consciousness. Where it is not found or which is devoid of it, that, of course, is a material substance. Animate and inanimate, both are eternal entities. Besides the above, there are other methods also for proving the eternity and immortality of soul. If you just ponder deep, you yourself can well realize the permanence of soul. There is no harm or objection in doing so, rather it carries you to truth, to accept the fact that the feelings of pleasure and pain, the desire of getting free from them, thoughts and inspirations etc. are all experiences due to the existence of soul and that soul is primarily a conscious entity. Since such conscious feeling, willing, and knowing are always present in soul, therefore it is eternal. For a clear understanding of such philosophical questions, it is advisable for you to first read *Shaddarshan-Samuchchaya*,¹⁹ which is being sent.

(2) The soul in its pure conscious state, i.e. in the state of self-realization, is the creator of its own inherent characteristics of knowledge, perception, and *smadhi*.²⁰ But in the state of ignorance, the soul becomes a creator of emotions like anger, conceit, greed etc. that are all foreign to it. Not only this much, under the influence of these emotions, soul,

through its instrumentality, also becomes a creator of things like pot and table etc. To put it more expressively, though soul is not the creator of the substratum of earth from which pots etc. are prepared, yet it becomes a creator of the processes which give new modifications to the substratum. This latter state and functioning of the soul is called "*karma*,"²¹ i.e. action in Jainism and "*bhranti*,"²² i.e. illusion in the Vedanta. Other systems of philosophy also refer to this state of soul by similar terms. But solemn and serene thinking reveals the truth that in reality the soul is neither a creator of pot etc. and nor of the emotions of anger, conceit etc. In fact, it is a creator of its own conscious characteristics of feeling, willing, and knowing.²³

(3) The *karmas* which are done in ignorance of one's own self, though in the beginning are merely seeds, yet at the time of maturity turn into trees laden with heavy fruits. It is therefore self-evident that soul itself has to bear the fruits of its actions. Just as by giving a touch to fire you first feel its heat and then pain follows, similar is the state of mundane soul. It also, by coming in contact with earthly objects by its sensuous organs, first gives rise to emotions of greed, anger, and deceit etc. and then as its fruits has to suffer the pangs of birth, death, and old age. Please ponder well over these problems with a detached mind and if you have any doubts please rewrite to me. It is the detached mind which gives strength for abstinence and control and ultimately guides the soul to *nirvana*.²⁴

Q. 2 What is God? Is He the creator of the universe?

A. (1) Just see, you and we are all mundane beings bound by *karmas*, i.e. our souls are in bondage of foreign matter and foreign impulses. The natural state of self with its intrinsic glory, free from all *karmas*, aloof from all impurities and bondages, is Godhead. God is endowed with the fullness of peace, bliss, and knowledge. This Godhead is inherent nature of self, but due to ignorance born of the bondages of *karmas*, one is unable to have a vision thereof. However when one realizes the truth that self is altogether aloof from the body

and its limitations, the dire fruits of actions and this self is introspected by mind. Then by and by one begins to realize the soul's inner glory of omniscience etc. If you just make a minute survey of the value of all things around you, you will find that there is nothing to excel in the glory of self. Thus we are led to conclude that God is a synonym of self. For this reason, I have a firm conviction that God is self and self is God: God has no abode outside self.

(2) God is not the creator of the universe.²⁵ All elements of nature such as atoms, space etc. are eternal and uncreated. They have got their own substratum. They cannot be created from substances other than themselves. Perchance if one says that God has created them, this also does not look sound because if God is a conscious being or consciousness is taken to be His characteristic, then how can atoms and space etc. be conceived to have been born from Him? It is quite impossible for the insentient to come out of the sentient. If we regard God also to be insentient, then it will become devoid of all the glory of peace, bliss, and knowledge. Just as it is impossible for material things to come out of God, similarly conscious beings called *jivas* cannot be born of Him. If God is taken to be sentient-cum-insentient, then we will have to content ourselves with the universe by calling it to be God, because universe consists both sentients and insentients. Perchance while admitting atoms, space etc. to be realities independent of God, you may assert that God is the giver of fruits of our actions. But this proposition also will fail. On this part, it would be advisable to consult *Shaddarshan-Samuchchaya*²⁶ which has dealt with this topic at length.²⁷

Q. 3 What is *moksha*?

A. *Moksha* or salvation is the absolute liberation of self from anger, conceit, greed, and other nescient propensities that bind the soul with earthly coils and other limitations. There is a natural urge in life to be free from all bondages and limitations. A close consideration of this urge makes truth of the above saying of the wise men to be self-evident.

Q. 4 Is it possible for an embodied soul to know precisely

whether he would attain *moksha* or not?

A. Just as a man whose hands have been tightly bound with a rope, on being slowly and slowly loosened feels a great relaxation from the bondage and begins to perceive as if the rope has ceased to exist or exert an influence. Similarly soul, which is bound with various kinds of nescient emotions, on being slowly and slowly released from them begins to feel the glory of salvation. The more and more the streaks of these emotions fade away, the more and more the soul shines in its luster untarnished by ignorance. As soon as there is complete extinction of these nescient forces, soul, even though it may be delineated by body, blooms out in its full splendor with a consciousness of freedom all-around. Thus soul, though residing in body, enjoys the blessings of salvation.

Q. 5 It is said in scriptures that a man after death goes to animal, mineral, and vegetable lives according to his actions. Do you think it to be right?

A. When a soul after death leaves one body to occupy the other, it moves according to the accumulated *karmas*. In that state, sometimes it takes animal form and sometimes mineral form. In mineral state, soul experiences the fruits of *karmas* with the help of touch sense, leaving other four senses. It does not mean that in mineral state soul becomes earth or stone, rather in this state soul assumes a physical shape akin to stone and itself resides there in an invisible form. Since in this state soul does not possess other senses besides the touch sense, it is called *prithvi-kaya-jiva*²⁸ and it is *eka-indriya*.²⁹ By and by after experiencing the fruits of *karmas* when it leaves that form to assume other forms of life, then its earthly body made of stone is merely a heap of particles devoid of life. After the departure of the soul, it does not evince instincts of hunger, sex, fear, and accumulation. Please mind that a soul in mineral state is not absolutely mineral, it has got a living aspect also. It is all due to its own nescient tendencies that a soul by the fruitification process has to assume an order of life which is one-sensed in consciousness and stonish in physical appearance. It is not merely a stone or boulder of earth. A soul

sometimes assumes animal form also, but thereby it does not become purely an embodied animal. To assume a bodily form is merely putting on an apparel, it is not its nature.³⁰

Q. 6 (This source does not state this question).

Q. 7 (This source does not state this question).

A. With regard to the sixth and seventh questions, it will be sufficient to say that stone or earth is not the doer of *karmas*, rather it is the soul embodied therein which is the doer of *karmas*. In spite of its embodiment, soul and body are as distinct from each other as milk and water are. Just as water and milk when mixed together look as one and the same, but in reality water is water and milk is milk as two separate entities. Similarly though soul in its one-sensed mineral state owing to the bondage of *karmas* looks like an inanimate stone, yet in reality soul is soul and it retains its separate entity. In that state, it experiences the urges of hunger, sex, fear, and accumulation invisible to a naked eye.

Q. 8 What is *arya dharma*?³¹ Is it right that almost all the religions have originated from the *Vedas*?³²

A. (1) While describing *arya dharma*, all faiths claim to be *arya dharma* or sublime religion. The Jains call Jainism to be *arya dharma*, the Buddhists declare Buddhism to be so, and the Vedantists name the Vedanta as such. Thus it has become a common practice. But for the wise, *arya dharma* is that spiritual path that leads one to self-realization. That is indeed *arya dharma* or sublime religion.

(2) It does not seem possible that almost all the religions originated from the *Vedas*. The reason for this, as I understand, is that the knowledge propounded by *tirthankaras*³³ and other great teachers is far greater than what is found in the *Vedas*. And this makes me to conclude that a perfect thing cannot be born from a limited one. Therefore it is not reasonable to presume that almost all religions originated from the *Vedas*. Vaishnavism etc. are of course certain religions which might have originated from the *Vedas*. No doubt the *Vedas* existed long before Mahavira and Buddha, the last propounders of Jainism and Buddhism, and

we may grant a still greater antiquity to them. But this fact alone does not establish the suggested proposition because time and truth do not go hand-in-hand. There is no logic in saying that whatever is antique is perfect and true and whatever is new is imperfect and untrue. As a matter of fact, everything in its essence is eternal but subject to modification. There is nothing which is absolutely destructible or absolutely producible. Thus there can be no objection in admitting that the principles enunciated by the Vedic, Jain, and all other faiths are eternal, but this much alone does not serve our purpose. We still have to find which of these principles are strong and sound to make us achieve our aspirations of life.³⁴

Q. 9 Who composed the *Vedas*? Are they eternal? If eternal, what does eternal mean?

A. (1) It seems the *Vedas* are an old composition.

(2) Any scripture in the shape of a book cannot be eternal. But of course if taken by the teachings, every scripture is eternal because there is not a single teaching which has not been propounded by different people in different ways. *Himsa* doctrine is as old as the doctrine of *ahimsa*. The point worth consideration is its value, i.e. how far it is useful for the living beings. Undoubtedly both are eternal, truth as well as untruth, but sometimes untruth takes upper hand and at others truth comes out triumphant.

Q. 10 Who composed *Gita*? It does not appear to be composed by God. What is the proof of its being composed by God?

A. (1) The above answer will be somewhat helpful in resolving these questions provided "God" is taken to mean an all-wise and all-knowing Being. But if the conception of God is taken to mean an eternal, inactive, and all-pervading entity like space, then of course it becomes quite impossible to conceive that such a God ever composed any book, because an act like the composition of a book has a beginning and whatever has a beginning cannot be said to be eternal.

(2) It is said that *Gita* was composed by Veda Vyasa³⁵ and because it deals with the lessons given by Lord Krishna to

Arjuna, so primarily Lord Krishna is said to be its author and that is all probable. This scripture is certainly very nice and whatever teachings are contained in it those come down to us from eternity. But it does not imply that its *shlokas*³⁶ are also eternal, nor is it possible to say that these *shlokas* were composed by an inactive God. An active embodied being alone can possibly be conceived to be their composer. In light of the above discussion, there is no harm in believing that God is an all-wise, all-knowing Being and the scriptures containing lessons taught by him are "God's Book" or *ishvariya-shastra*.

Q. 11 Is there any merit in performing bloody sacrifice?³⁷

A. Man only acquires demerit by slaughtering, sacrificing, or causing slightest pain to animals. It matters little whether the animal is killed for sacrifice or for the sake of God in a temple. It is true that alms are given at the time of sacrifice which are a source of gaining merit, but being associated with *himsa*, i.e. injury to animals, this sort of alms-giving also should not be consented to.

Q. 12 When it is said that a particular *dharma* or religion is the highest, then is there any harm in checking validity and asking reasons for the superiority?

A. To declare validity and superiority of the teachings of a particular *dharma* without considering the reasons thereof is undoubtedly very harmful, for it would give rise to propagation of all sorts of things good and bad, meritorious and demeritorious. Validity or non-validity, superiority or otherwise of anything can only be established by cogent and potent reasons. I think only those teachings of a *dharma* are best which prove themselves to be strong and sound in destroying the cycle of births and deaths and in realizing pure and peaceful state of life.³⁸

Q.13 Do you know anything about Christianity? If so, what do you think about it?

A. I have ordinary information about Christianity. But it is common knowledge that the methods of thought and achievement of Indian sages are different from those of the foreigners. In Christianity, soul is always believed to be

dependent on others and even in the highest heaven it is not taken to be free from limitations and bondages. In Christian scriptures, very little light has been thrown on real intrinsic nature of soul, nor is there any systematic description of the causes of birth, death, and other various vicissitudes of life, and nor have the scriptures dealt with right ways and methods for removal of the causes of birth, death, and vicissitudes. For these reasons, Christianity does not appeal to me to be the highest religion. This opinion of mine is not based on any religious prejudice. If you want to know anything further in this connection, I shall try to elucidate.

Q. 14 It is a matter of faith with the Christians that *Bible* is the word of God and Jesus Christ is His son. What is your opinion about it?

A. This of course can be taken as a matter of faith, but it cannot be established by proof. The same reasoning which I have advanced above to disprove the Godly character of *Gita* and the *Vedas*, can usefully be applied to Bible as well. You will keep in mind that God is a perfect Being liberated from the cycles of birth and death. Therefore a being who gets incarnated or takes birth can never be a God. As birth is the result of attachment and aversion and God is devoid of these blemishes, so God can never be conceived to be assuming births and incarnations. Allegorically, of course, Jesus can be taken to be a son of God, but rationally such a belief is untenable. How can there be a son to a liberated God? If for the sake of an argument it may be taken to be true, then how this birth will be conceived to have taken place. Still further, if this relationship of father and son be taken to be eternal, then how this relationship will hold good? All these points are worth consideration in this connection. As far as I think, the proposition when analyzed would never come true.

Q. 15 The prophecy about Jesus in the Old Testament has come to be true. How do you explain it?

A. It does not alter the position. It may be so, still we have to judge the validity of testimony of both the Testaments. Moreover such a prophecy about Jesus' birth is no sound

proof of his being an incarnation of God, because such prophecies of birth are possible to be made on the basis of astrology etc. It is also possible that Jesus' birth might have been prophesied by some person by intuition, but in the absence of cogent proof it cannot be accepted. And such soothsayers cannot be held to be omniscient teachers. Such a prophecy appears to be based more on faith than any reasoning, for there are so many difficulties in the way of its being accepted as true.

Q. 16 There are so many miracles about Jesus narrated in Bible. What do you say about them?

A. It is quite impossible for a dead body to be resurrected by the entry of the soul which has left it or by some other soul. If such a thing begins to happen, then the whole science of causation of birth and death will come to an end. But there is no gainsaying the fact that various sorts of miraculous powers are achieved by spiritual discipline and yogic practices. It is all within the pale of possibility that Jesus also might have attained several of these powers, but mind such powers are far inferior to the glory of omnipotent soul. Glory and grandeur of soul is infinite. You may better discuss this point when we meet.

Q. 17 Is it possible for us to know about our future and past births?

A. Yes, it is possible. Men of unblemished knowledge can know such things by intuition. Even ordinary people can know them by logical reasoning. Just as by looking at the clouds and other symptoms of weather a rainfall can be ascertained. So by looking to the tendencies of a being, it is easy to determine the previous life which led to the present birth. By this method, of course, it is likely that one may not be able to visualize full picture of previous births, still a good deal thereof can be known. Similarly from the above symptoms it is possible to ascertain one's future trends of life as well. The more minutely we go into the details of life, the more vivid picture of future and previous births would come to light.

Q. 18 Who will know it?

A. So far this question is concerned, the answer is covered in the above explanation.

Q. 19 You have named so many omniscient teachers. Well, what is the proof of their being so?

A. If you are asking this question with particular reference to my experiences, then I would like to answer this way: "A man who has risen above his mundane state develops in him such a divine life that his very words, looks, and presence inspire in others the same sort of feelings of peace, bliss, and excellence as felt by him." By this, it is natural to infer that he has attained *moksha*. Besides my own experiences, there are so many scriptures to verify this truth.

Q. 20 What do you think about the final fate of the universe?

A. It is unbelievable to me that one day the universe will be empty of souls and the drama of life will come to an end with their liberation. To me, the universe is a running concern. It is a system of double traffic of birth and death, of integration and disintegration. It will go on to be what it is today. Change of course is its law. The old order is being replaced by the new. If it grows in one part, it decays in the other. If we make a close study of this problem, we would come to the conclusion that total destruction or *pralaya* of this universe is but impossible. Universe does not mean this earth alone.

Q. 21 Is there such a thing as *pralaya* of the universe?

A. If by *pralaya* you mean total extinction, then such a thing is quite impossible because there is nothing which is absolutely destructible. But if by *pralaya* you mean an absorption of the universe into God etc., then it may be acceptable to some extent, but to my mind even this much does not appear to be possible. It is inconceivable that in some remote future all the souls and other objects of the universe will reach such a stage of similarity of change and uniformity of nature that they would all mingle together as one without any distinction, bringing the whole show to an absolute rest.

If once such a stage is reached, it is equally inconceivable how this uniformity will be disturbed to restart activity? If by *pralaya* you mean an invisible diversity and a visible uniformity of souls, it would be equally untenable for in the absence of bodies there will be no medium of diversity in them. If you take your stand on the diversity of sex instincts of souls, we will have to presume that in *pralaya* all beings will be one-sensed. If we proceed on this presumption, the absence of other forms of life, i.e. two-sensed or three-sensed etc., in *pralaya* becomes inexplicable. In short, the conception of total extinction of the universe is altogether untenable.

Q. 22 Will there ever develop an equitable order out of the inequities of today?

A. If anybody tries to indulge in inequities, he should be discouraged from doing so at all times. Both equity and inequity are incessant tendencies, but it is most desirable that we should ever try to adopt equity and give up immoral and unjust ways of life, rather it is our duty to do so for spiritual progress. It is inconceivable that all living beings will give up inequities one day and equity will prevail everywhere. It is a mere utopia to think that such a state of affairs will ever come.

Q. 23 Is it possible to get *moksha* by *bhakti*³⁹ alone without achievement of knowledge?

A. *Bhakti* leads to knowledge and knowledge leads to *moksha*. Illiteracy is no hindrance to devotion and attainment of knowledge for knowledge is the very essence of soul. The significance of devotion lies in the fact that it purifies knowledge and pure knowledge leads to *moksha*. According to my belief, there is no attainment of *moksha* without acquisition of perfect knowledge and perfect knowledge includes knowledge of languages as well. Undoubtedly literacy is helpful in *moksha*, but it is not compulsory to be literate to acquire knowledge of self.

Q. 24 How far is it true that Rama and Krishna are the *avatars*?⁴⁰ If so, what does the idea of *avatar* imply? Were they God themselves or a part of God? Will *moksha* be attainable by worshipping them?

A. (1) I believe that Rama and Krishna were great personages. Since they were souls, they were certainly God also. If they annihilated their bondages of *karmas*, then there can be no dispute in their having attained *moksha* as well. But I cannot accept the theory of a living being a part of God because there are thousands of things which militate against this idea. In the first instance, well-recognized differentiation between our mundane state of bondage and our cherished goal of emancipation will be put to a naught. Secondly, thereby all the nescient tendencies of life e.g. anger, greed, deceit, and conceit, etc. which are subduing the worldly beings will be equally attributable to God. If they are so attributed, God will no longer remain God, the highest ideal of life. He will lose His Godhead and will become one of the ordinary beings. Thirdly, under this theory all worldly beings will become as perfect as God and they will stand no need of exerting themselves for procurement of any ends of life. Moreover they will no longer be liable for any fruits of their actions. When in face of such flaws and fallacies above idea is not at all appealable, then how such great personages as Rama and Krishna be taken as parts of God? Though there is no harm in accepting that both of these great personages were God-in-embryo, yet it is to be considered whether perfect glory of Godhood had bloomed in them or not.

(2) The answer to your second part of question is very easy, as you already know that *moksha* means spiritual state of freedom from all kinds of attachment, aversion, and ignorance etc. So by whosoever teachings this pure spiritual state of freedom be attainable, his worship of course is most fruitful. By devotion for him, the devotee will necessarily contemplate upon the glorious and blissful state of the adored, will acquire faith in similar ultimate state for himself, and by practice would mold himself in the same set of life as that of the worshiped. Thus it will be possible for the devotee to attain *moksha* as a result of his devotion to the worshiped. Except this, no other form of worship is advisable for the attainment of *moksha*. Other forms of worship may prove helpful to

attract one to the true path, but it is not a certainty.

Q. 25 Who are Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh?

A. It is possible that these might be representatives of the three fundamental functions of the universe, creation (Brahma), maintenance (Vishnu), and disruption (Mahesh).⁴¹ If so, their personification as deities is well and good. Or they might be allegorical names of some other trinity (such as, the three aspects of primeval Lord *Vrasabha*: first as *Vishnu* - the great ruler who laid down the foundation of state and society, secondly as *Mahesh* - the *Mahayogi* who destroyed the worlds of birth, death, and old age, and thirdly as *Brahma* - the omniscient sage who gave the knowledge of great truths of the eternal drama of life). Taken in this way, the idea becomes intelligible. But the accounts as given in the *Puranas*⁴² do not at all appeal to me. My interpretation finds support for this fact also that there are many great truths which have been described in the *Puranas* in allegorical forms for teaching by lessons. We should try to derive the benefit from the lessons of this allegory without entering into the controversial matters about Brahma etc. To me, the allegorical interpretation looks very nice.

Q. 26 If a snake comes to bite us, what should we do? Should we remain calm and quiet and allow it to bite or kill it outright to save ourselves?

A. If I reply this question in the affirmative and simply say that let the snake bite, it would of course become a great problem. But, any how, for those who have realized the truth that body is a transient thing, it would not be at all reasonable to kill the creature. So my reply to this question is that those who are anxious for their spiritual good, should, when confronted with such a situation, offer their body to the snake rather than take its life. You may well ask, well, what about those who care little for spiritual good? For such people, my simple reply is that let them wander in wretched forms like hell etc. How can one, like myself, advise them to kill a snake? It is the non-Aryan attitude of mind which teaches the killing of serpents or other creatures. We should ever aspire to

be free from this attitude, even in dreams. Such are my answers to your questions in short and here I close my letter. In the end, I will advise you to closely study the book *Shaddarshan-Samuchchaya* and ponder over these questions a bit more seriously. In case you need any further information, you may please just write to me and I shall try to elucidate. The best thing of course is that we should meet and have a personal talk about these questions.

Notes and References

1. Gandhi, M. K., *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments With Truth*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927, p. 100.
2. See: Preface, footnote 2.
3. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*... op. cit., 1927, p. 103.
4. Ibid., pp. 103-104.
5. Ibid., p. 104.
6. Ibid., pp. 100, 101.
7. Ibid., pp. 113-114.
8. Ibid., p. 114; Also see: Chapter 2, footnote 14.
9. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*... op. cit., 1927, p. 114.
10. See: Preface, footnote 3.
11. Government of India, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 32. New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Navajivan Trust, 1958-1984, pp. 4-5.
12. See: Preface, footnote 4.
13. See: Government of India, "Preface" in *The Collected Works*... Vol. 32...op. cit., 1958-1984.
14. *Mumukshutva* is firm seeker of *moksha*; Also see: Preface, footnote 4 and Chapter 2, footnote 45.
15. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*... op. cit., 1927, pp. 114-115.
16. Rajchandra's reply from Bombay was dated Saturday, October 20, 1894. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works*...Vol. 32... op. cit., 1958-1984, p. 593.
17. Two different Gujarati to English translations were available of Gandhi's questions and Rajchandra's answers.

One translation was rendered by Brahmachari Goverdhandas and published by Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust in Ahmedabad, India for free distribution. This translation, with minor editing to improve readability, has been included in Chapter 4 with immense gratitude to the translator and the source. Another version of the translation was included in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* and published by the Government of India and Navajivan Trust. This translation has been included as Appendix 2, again with immense gratitude to the translator and the sources. See: Goverdhandas, Brahmachari, *Mahatma Gandhi and Kavi Rajchandra: Questions Answered*. Ahmedabad: Srimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, 1989, pp. 9-20; Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 32... op. cit.*, 1958-1984, pp. 593-602.

Note 1: It should be noted that Question 16 about the miracles of Jesus is stated in the translation by Brahmachari Goverdhandas and is omitted in the other translation. The question about Buddha (Question 20) appears in the translation included in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* and does not appear in the translation by Brahmachari Goverdhandas.

Note 2: The reader will find different emphases in the translations and a comparative reading is recommended.

Note 3: While answering Gandhi's questions, Rajchandra refers to Jain philosophy at many places. The reader is advised to consult Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life to properly understand Rajchandra's answers.

18. *Karmas* are actions or doings. Also see: Chapter 2, footnote 20.
19. *Shaddarshan-Samuchchaya* is a treatise of Jain philosophy. *Shaddarshan-Samuchchaya* or *Shatdarshan-Samuchchaya* refers to the same source. See: Appendix 2 - Gandhi's Questions and Rajchandra's Replies.
20. *Smadhi* is spiritual equanimity.
21. See: Chapter 2, footnote 20 and Chapter 3, footnote 24.

22. *Bhranti* is thought guided by the illusionary energy *maya*.
23. The conceptions of *karma*, *bhranti* etc. though somewhat different in Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, remain essentially the same. For further information, see the references in Chapter 2, footnote 20.
24. See: Preface, footnote 4. Also for further information, see the sources mentioned in Chapter 2, footnote 20.
25. See: Chapter 3, footnote 31.
26. See: Chapter 4, footnote 19 above.
27. Additionally for a perspective on these ideas, see Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
28. *Prithvi-kaya-jiva* is a living being with earthly body.
29. *Eka-indriya* is one-sensed being.
30. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
31. *Arya dharma* refers here to a noble or sublime religion. *Arya* means noble or sublime and *dharma* refers to the prescribed duties and ways of living.
32. *Vedas* are the oldest written scriptures in the world and the basis of Vedic Hinduism. See: Radhakrishnan, S. and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957.
33. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
34. The reference here is to "spiritual aspirations."
35. Veda Vyasa was a sage of antiquity, who wrote *Mahabharata* epic and several scriptural treatises.
36. *Shlokas* are poetic verses in Sanskrit.
37. During Vedic times, religious ceremonies often included animal sacrifices.
38. The reference here is inclusive of the goal of *moksha*.
39. *Bhakti* is devotional stance and practice to achieve the spiritual goal of *moksha*. For more information, see the references in Chapter 3, footnote 21.
40. *Avatar* is direct incarnation of God with all the powers and propensities. According to the Hindu tradition, Rama and Krishna have been two *avtaras* worshipped all over India.
41. This is the trinity aspect in Hinduism. God in His three

forms - Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh or Shiva - is the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the universe. See: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. Los Angeles: International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 1986.

42. Puranas are a part of the Hindu scriptures. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957.

Chapter 5

Rajchandra's Influences on Gandhi

It has been mentioned before that Gandhi's main goal in life was to attain *moksha*¹ and see God face-to-face. All his personal, social, and moral efforts were directed at this end and he tried to take guidance from the past secular and religious traditions, great men of different times, and his own experiences, austerities, endeavors, and introspections. Outwardly Gandhi remained a worldly man while discharging his mundane responsibilities, but inwardly he was focused on his spiritual goals and lived a detached life. For such goals and orientations, he owed to his father, mother Putlibai, own childhood and adult experiences, and his Christian, Muslim, and Hindu friends in England, South Africa, and India. Gandhi believed in the age-old tradition of seeking a *guru* for the purpose of attaining *moksha* and was always in search of a perfect *guru*. Three people, Rajchandra, Leo Tolstoy, and John Ruskin, inspired him in this regard and Rajchandra was on the top of the list due to his superior spiritual strengths. Gandhi though adored Rajchandra and publicly acknowledged his debt to him on many occasions, did not enthrone him as his spiritual master because he felt that Rajchandra still had not reached the highest spiritual level and lacked a few qualities to be a perfect *guru*.²

Gandhi became acquainted with Rajchandra in 1891 after his return from England and was first impressed by his memory feats. Later he also came to know Rajchandra's many other qualities, such as his independent judgment, simplicity, piety, wisdom, renunciation, spotless character, freedom from all kinds of blind orthodoxy, wide knowledge of the

scriptures, respect for different religions, ability to analyze and assess spiritual issues, deep concern and compassion for others, sincerity and loyalty to all, and remarkable ability to balance the household, business, and spiritual lives. Gandhi admired Rajchandra's riveted devotion to his spiritual pursuits and burning desire to achieve *moksha*. Gandhi used to visit Rajchandra frequently at his home and place of business and discussed with him his spiritual questions and other problems. Through these discourses, Gandhi developed an interest in Rajchandra which later changed into the relationship of a teacher and a disciple. Gandhi knew that Rajchandra lead the life of a *karmayogi*³ and he wanted to follow in his footsteps and learn from him as much as possible about the spiritual pursuits. Whenever Gandhi had a doubt, question, or inquiry, he consulted Rajchandra and was always satisfied with his answers. Of particular note is the advice Gandhi received from Rajchandra when his Christian and Muslim friends in South Africa tried to convert him respectively to Christianity and Islam and Rajchandra wrote in his reply: "On a dispassionate view of the question, I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought of Hinduism, its vision of the soul, or its charity."⁴ This last remark cleared Gandhi's all doubts and he stayed in the religion in which he was naturally born.⁵

Rajchandra's Influences

Rajchandra's influences on Gandhi's life, thought, spiritual pursuits, and reform endeavors are many, but are little known. This chapter attempts to present some of these influences in a succinct way.

Vow of Brahmcharya

One important influence of Rajchandra on Gandhi was in terms of the latter's vow of *brahmcharya*,⁶ even in relation to his own wife at the young age of thirty-seven. Gandhi shares that in South Africa he was a happily married man devoted to

the monogamous ideals and faithful to his wife. He could not recall exactly what circumstance set his thoughts in the direction of taking the vow of *brahmacharya*, but one predominant factor was the influence of Rajchandra on him. Gandhi had read somewhere that Mrs. Gladstone, the wife of a British Parliamentarian, insisted on preparing tea for Mr. Gladstone even in the House of Commons and that this had become a rule in the life of this illustrious couple. One day Gandhi shared with Rajchandra his admiration for Mrs. Gladstone's devotion to her husband and praised her caring attitude and the conjugal love. Rajchandra was not impressed and he asked Gandhi:⁷

"Which of the two do you prize more, the love of Mrs. Gladstone for her husband as his wife, or her devoted service irrespective of her relation to Mr. Gladstone? Supposing she had been his sister, or his devoted servant, and ministered to him with the same attention, what would you have said? Do we not have instances of such devoted sisters or servants? Supposing you had found the same loving devotion in a male servant, would you have been pleased in the same way as in Mrs. Gladstone's case? Just examine the viewpoint suggested by me."

Rajchandra's words appeared harsh to Gandhi at that time and he felt perplexed. But he continued to reflect on the posed question and realized that there was a substantial amount of truth in what Rajchandra said. For a wife, it was not so great if she was devoted to her husband, because this was a natural expectation in the conjugal relationship. But a similar devotion on the part of a sister or a servant was many times more admirable, as the devotion in these cases was more selfless and required a special effort in the cultivation. Rajchandra's views started making sense to Gandhi and he began to reflect upon his own relationship with his wife. He began to question whether his devotion and faithfulness to his wife were selfless, or were those feelings based on an expectation in the conjugal relationship that also included lust and carnal desire. Gandhi's conclusion was that probably the

latter was true. Then what should be his relationship with his wife and how that relationship could be made more pure and selfless, he considered. Gandhi resolved thereupon that he would take the vow of *brahmacharya* and have only pure and selfless relationship with his wife.⁸

Earlier also starting in 1901, Gandhi had tried to control his sex drive. But the motive at that time was to escape from having more children through natural birth control methods. He and his wife started sleeping in separate beds and Gandhi would return to his bed only after the day's hard work had completely exhausted him. These measures did not work and Gandhi failed twice in his efforts at observing *brahmacharya*. In 1906, he had a full discussion of the matter with his wife and explained his thoughts to her. The wife had no objection to Gandhi's plan of having no more sex relations with her. Gandhi succeeded this time and never broke the vow of *brahmacharya* again. He shares:⁹

"After full discussion and mature deliberation I took the vow in 1906. I had not shared my thoughts with my wife until then, but only consulted her at the time of taking the vow. She had no objection. But I had great difficulty in making the final resolve. I had not the necessary strength. How was I to control my passions? The elimination of carnal relationship with one's wife seemed then a strange thing. But I launched forth with faith in the sustaining power of God... As I look back upon the twenty years of the vow,¹⁰ I am filled with pleasure and wonderment... The freedom and joy that came to me after taking the vow, had never been experienced before 1906."

Having himself tried and finally accepted the vow of *brahmacharya*, Gandhi explains that the observance of *brahmacharya* is not just abstinence from sexual activity and sexual desires. Rather it requires control over all the senses related to hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, and the thought pattern. Anyone who tries to control only sex drive and allows other senses a free play is bound to fail in the effort at *brahmacharya*. Gandhi also tries to explain that it is

not sufficient that one would not look at a woman or man with lustful eyes, the animal passions have to be controlled even as to exclude the thought of sex and ultimately one could not entertain a carnal desire even in relation to one's own wife or husband. In this elevated state of *brahmacharya*, the husband and wife have to consider themselves as lifelong partners and friends and establish the relationship in this sense. A sinful touch, gesture, or word even in relation to one's spouse is a breach of the principle of *brahmacharya*. *Brahmacharya* also means a simultaneous soul-orientation and desire for *moksha*. Only a physical definition of *brahmacharya* is not enough.¹¹

Gandhi states that the observance of *brahmacharya* is also important for the protection of one's body, mind, and soul. He states: "Every day of the vow has taken me nearer the knowledge that in *brahmacharya* lies the protection of the body, the mind, and the soul. For *brahmacharya* was now no process of hard penance, it was a matter of consolation and joy. Every day revealed a fresh beauty in it."¹² Gandhi advises that one should not unduly waste sexual energy for physical gratification, as the energy is an important resource and meant for fuller development of the body, mind, and soul.¹³ Not only that, the misuse of sexual energy causes body to weaken and accounts for many diseases. Therefore, self-control is needed all the time and one should not let the mind go astray. At the same time, Gandhi mentions that one should not artificially suppress the sexual desires if mind keeps on going astray. But it is one thing to allow the mind to harbor impure thoughts and a different thing if the mind goes astray in spite of one's effort at self-control. Gandhi suggests that the mind can be controlled through *abhyasa*,¹⁴ *vairagya*,¹⁵ and *tapas*.¹⁶ Victory, he says, in the end will be of one who refuses to cooperate with the mind in its evil wanderings.¹⁷

Gandhi claims that in addition to the achieved greater self-control and fewer passions, the vow of *brahmacharya* was also helpful for him in better discharge of his public responsibilities and more efficient implementation of the Satyagraha¹⁸ struggles in South Africa and India. He advises

that if one seriously wanted to devote life to public service, then one should rise above family orientations and not harbor desires for position, power, and wealth in the society. All these posed hindrances in public service and thus needed to be curtailed. Family loyalties particularly led to narrower orientations and without the vow of *brahmacharya* one could not keep service to community and humanity over and above service to the family. Gandhi, therefore, took the vow of *brahmacharya*, raised himself above narrow family orientations, and decided to live the life of a *vanaprastha*,¹⁹ so that he could be free from the householder's responsibilities and devote more time and energy to public service. The other reason for Gandhi to take the vow of *brahmacharya* was his desire for soul- purification, self-realization, and pursuit of the goal of *moksha*. The vow of *brahmacharya* was initially prompted by Gandhi's own introspections and influences of Rajchandra, but later Gandhi's study of the *shastras*²⁰ also confirmed the suitability of this path. Keeping the vow of *brahmacharya*, though, did not turn out easy for Gandhi and it required much effort and vigilance on his part.²¹ Ultimately he did succeed and in the process also expanded the meaning and purpose of the vow of *brahmacharya* manifold.

Diet and Dietetic Experiments

Diet and dietetic experiments is another area where Rajchandra exercised considerable influence on Gandhi. At the time of his departure to England, Gandhi had promised his mother that he would not drink alcohol, eat meat, and have illicit relations with girls. However, he constantly ran into difficulties regarding his vow of vegetarianism. The food he got in England was boiled and without salt and condiments. It tasted insipid. Gandhi was in search a good vegetarian restaurant, where he could enjoy good food and eat to his heart's content. He eventually found one such restaurant. The *Salt's Plea for Vegetarianism* was displayed in the window of this restaurant. Gandhi bought the book and read it

thoroughly. This book made a great impression on Gandhi and he mentions that earlier he was vegetarian because of the promise made to his mother, but now he became a vegetarian by choice.²² He writes:²³

"I read Salt's book from cover to cover and was very much impressed by it. From the date of reading this book, I may claim to have become a vegetarian by choice... I had all along abstained from meat in the interests of truth and the vow I had taken, but had wished at the same time that every Indian should be a meat-eater, and had looked forward to being one myself freely and openly some day, and to enlisting others in the cause. The choice was now made in favor of vegetarianism, the spread of which henceforth became my mission."

Gandhi later read other books on this subject²⁴ and found that vegetarianism was recommended on ethical, scientific, practical, and medical grounds. The ethical argument was that man belonged to the highest species and his supremacy was not meant to prey upon the lower species, but to protect them. There also had to be mutual aid between the higher and the lower species. Some writers suggested that food was not meant for enjoyment, but for survival. Other writers recommended that man should abstain not only from flesh-meat, but also from products like eggs and milk as those came from animals. Scientifically, the writers concluded that man was better off living on fruits and vegetables. According to the practical argument, the writers demonstrated that a vegetarian diet was the least expensive. Medically, they recommended that all spices and condiments should be avoided as those were harmful to health. These arguments made Gandhi think about his own diet pattern and he engaged himself in life-long dietetic experiments. Gandhi stopped taking sweets and condiments and gradually his fondness for salt and spices also wore away. Now he started enjoying boiled food, which earlier tasted so tasteless to him. The diet reform also included giving up tea and coffee and substitution of cocoa in their place. Other experiments included periodic

giving up of starchy foods at times and living on bread, fruits, and nuts only at other times. These dietetic experiments taught Gandhi self-control and he learned that taste of food and desire for things like salt and condiments were more a matter of mental cravings than a real need of the body for them.²⁵

After his return from England, Gandhi used to discuss with Rajchandra his dietetic enigmas. It was Rajchandra who first pointed out to Gandhi that the use of cow's or buffalo's milk also posed a hindrance in one's spiritual path, as the milk came from an animal's body and had the tendency to arouse animal passions.²⁶ Gandhi later discovered that the books on vegetarianism supported this argument. Gandhi, henceforth, pledged to abjure milk and started living on a diet of fruits and nuts.²⁷ Gandhi also found out that control of the palate in other respects also was helpful in observing the vow of *brahmacharya* and that an intense effort was needed to control the palate. He mentions: "I have found from experience that the observance of *brahmacharya* becomes comparatively easy, if one acquires mastery over the palate."²⁸ He adds: "Eating is necessary only for sustaining the body and keeping it a fit instrument for service. It must not be practiced for self-indulgence. Food must, therefore, be taken like medicine and with restraint."²⁹ Additionally, Gandhi says that a *brahmachari's* diet has to be limited, simple, without spices, and uncooked if possible. Fresh fruits and nuts are helpful in controlling animal passions and thus observance of the vow of *brahmacharya*. Different foods make different impacts on the passions and one has to be selective in the choice of taken foods. Gandhi stresses that a strong connection exists between the body, mind, and carnal desires. A carnal mind craves for delicacies and luxuries and becomes a slave of such cravings. Self-examination, self-restraint, and dietetic restrictions, therefore, are necessary in order to observe the vow of *brahmacharya*, which also needs a spiritual orientation and faith in God and prayer to be successful.³⁰

Gandhi's interest in the dietetic experiments initially

evolved out of his need to reduce the expenditures in England and gain more hygienic and healthy living. Religious ferment was not yet a part of these experiments. As time passed, religious ferment also became the motive in view of Gandhi's effort for spiritual purification, spiritual growth, and attainment of *moksha*. The same motive is evident in Gandhi's other personal, social, and political endeavors as well. He writes:³¹

"What I want to achieve - what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years - is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain *moksha*. I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing, and all my ventures in the political field, are directed to the same end."

Fasting

Fasting has long been practiced in the Indian tradition as a way of disciplining the body and mind and eventually gaining spiritual purification. Gandhi, as a boy, had seen his mother and other Jain families fasting and observing all kinds of physical and mental austerities. He was much influenced by these practices and Rajchandra later added his own impacts by way of a living example of such austerities.

Gandhi mentions that fasting is necessary as an external aid to the disciplining of mind and observing the vow of *brahmacharya*, just as proper selection and restriction of diet are also necessary for this purpose. All sense organs need nourishment and cooperation of the mind in order to have a free play and without these the sense organs feel powerless and become subdued. Fasting, thus, curbs animal passions and a fast undertaken with this goal in mind is very helpful. Fast, however, can not be mechanical or limited only to the body, the mind and will power also have to be a part of it. Those who fast physically, but keep on thinking of foods all the time, control neither the palate and nor the passions. Mind as the center of all sensuality needs to be bridled and one has to seek

the innermost passions lingering in the recesses of the heart and try to get rid of them. So long as the mind is not under control, a self-disciplined life and the practice of *brahmacharya* are not possible.³²

Simplicity

When Gandhi was growing up in India, spiritual values were in prominence and life was simple. Gandhi's own father and mother were two examples of a religious and simple living. Though the prime minister of the Kathiawad States and well-off, Gandhi's father led a simple and renunciated life. Gandhi's mother also was very religious and she led a simple life. Gandhi was much influenced by them as well as by the social and cultural milieu of the time. In England also, Gandhi kept a simple life style. His elder brother used to send him money for his stay and studies expenditures. Gandhi felt concerned about it and tried to reduce the expenditures by renting cheaper rooms, shifting the living quarters periodically in order to be closer to the places of study and engagements, and walked rather than use public transportation. He started preparing own breakfast and dinner at home, substituted cheaper ingredients in the meals, ate outside in cheaper restaurants when necessary, preplanned all the expenditures, and kept full account of the expenditures in a notebook to the last penny. Thus he was able to live on a shilling and three pence a day, which was a reduction of almost half in the expenditures.³³ Gandhi adds:³⁴

"Let not the reader think that this living made my life by any means a dreary affair. On the contrary, the change harmonized my inward and outward life. It was also more in keeping with the means of my family. My life was certainly more truthful and soul knew no bounds of joy."

After his returned to India, Gandhi used to watch Rajchandra at his home and place of business and observed how he lived a detached and simple life in the spirit of *vairagya*.³⁵ Whatever Rajchandra did, whether eating, resting,

lying in bed, or conducting his business, he was not interested in the things around and was not tempted by material luxuries or worldly pleasures. He dressed simply, ate simply, lived simply, and accepted whatever was offered to him or came naturally in his way. Rajchandra's life became a role model for Gandhi and he wanted to live like him.³⁶ Gandhi, thus, started further simplifying his personal and family arrangements and these experiments in simplicity continued in South Africa and then in India. In Durban, for example, Gandhi changed his living style and started washing own clothes and cutting own hair. In Johannesburg, self-labor aspect of simplicity was intensified and effort was made to accomplish all work without any outside help. The simplicity effort extended to such family/*ashram* matters as the making of flour with a purchased hand-mill, preparation of own bread and meals, cleaning of the house, and doing the scavenger's work. Even the Satyagraha publicity materials were printed and distributed through own effort. The *ashrams* Gandhi established in South Africa and India later became models of simplicity for others.³⁷

Religious Equanimity

Religious equanimity and tolerance came to Gandhi through his childhood encounters with different religions and later through his association with the Theosophist, Muslim, and Christian friends in England, South Africa, and India. Much, however, he owed to Rajchandra in this regard because of the valuable lessons he learned from him through frequent discourses.

Gandhi's family had a Vaishnava³⁸ temple in the Haveli³⁹ and as a child he visited the temple regularly with his mother, father, and other family members. The idols of Shiva and Rama were installed in the temple and both Bhagavad Gita and Koran used to be read. Holy people belonging to different religious faiths visited the temple and talked to Gandhi's father on religious matters. Muslim and Parsi friends also

visited. Gandhi listened to all of them with deep interest and respect. These early experiences inculcated in Gandhi a serious religious orientation and also respect for different religions. The only exception at that time was Christianity, as Christian missionaries in those days stood near Gandhi's high school and poured abuses on Hindu gods in order to convert Hindus to Christianity. They also made the new converts eat beef, drink liquor, change to a Western name, and wear European dress. The missionaries, then, forced the new converts to defame Hindu gods and the country's age-old customs and traditions. Gandhi thought that a religion which allowed people to do all this was not worth respecting and he did not have a favorable impression of Christianity.⁴⁰ Only later in England and South Africa, he was able to change his opinion and develop a more favorable impression of Christianity.

During his stay in England, two Theosophist friends invited Gandhi to read with them Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Song Celestial (Bhagavad Gita)*. They also recommended to him the reading of Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia* (about Buddha). Gandhi read these texts, but later also read the Old and New Testament and several other religious books. *The Song Celestial* made a great impression on Gandhi and he found the following verse particularly enchanting:⁴¹

If one

Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs Attraction;
from attraction grows desire,

Desire flames to fierce passion,

passion breeds Recklessness;

then the memory-all betrayed-

Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,

Till purpose, mind, and man are all undone.

In the New Testament, the Sermon on the Mount made a deep impression on Gandhi: "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak too."⁴² This reminded Gandhi of a

poem by Shamal Bhatt:⁴³

"For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal;
 For a kindly greeting, bow thou down with zeal;
 For a simple penny, pay thou back with gold;
 If thy life be rescued, life do not withhold.
 Thus the words and actions of the wise regard;
 Every little service tenfold they reward.
 But the truly noble know all men as one,
 And return with gladness good for evil done."

Gandhi later also read the works of several social philosophers, like Leo Tolstoy, John Ruskin, Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Emerson, and others.⁴⁴ He became aware that religion was to be understood as a broad concept and love, compassion, altruism, and service to others have to be its central components. He also realized that in the conception of religion there were infinite possibilities for universal love compassion, altruism, and service to others.⁴⁵

Rajchandra was a Jain, an expert in Jain philosophy and well-versed with Jain scriptures. He had also widely read the scriptures of other religions. Rajchandra raised himself above specific dogmas and philosophies and he never took part in religious controversies. He used to say that every religion appeared to be perfect from the point of view of its followers and imperfect from the point of view of the followers of other faiths. Thus examined, every religion was both perfect and imperfect. He advised that people as a rule should stay in the faiths in which they were naturally born, but must also respect other faiths. Everyone by following own faith could attain *moksha* and *moksha* meant total freedom from all attachments and aversions, including of the dogmas and philosophies of one's own religion. He said: "Follow your own faith... *moksha* basically also means to rise above the faiths and be perfectly free of all aversions and attachments."⁴⁶ He explained that different faiths were like "so many walled enclosures in which men and women were confined" and those enclosures had to be transcended in the path to spiritual purification and growth. Even the scriptures provided no further help after a certain

spiritual stage was reached. At that stage, instead of helping, the scriptures became fetters and hindered further spiritual growth. Only own effort helped at that time.⁴⁷

Gandhi clearly imbibed the spirit of Rajchandra's messages⁴⁸ and thus in the "Discourses on the Gita"⁴⁹ he freely makes use of different scriptures and makes references to the learned lessons from the Bible, Koran, Pilgrim's Progress, and the works of Rajchandra. This is also evident in Gandhi's other social, political, and spiritual endeavors and his life in different *ashrams* in South Africa and India.⁵⁰ Gandhi explains:⁵¹

"The principal faiths of the world constitute a revelation of Truth; but as they have all been outlined by imperfect men, they have been affected by imperfections and alloyed with untruth. One must, therefore, entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as one accords to one's own. Where such tolerance becomes a law of life, conflict between different faiths becomes impossible."

Aparigraha

*Aparigraha*⁵² is another area of Rajchandra's influence on Gandhi. *Aparigraha* is a core concept in Jain living and Gandhi had before him Rajchandra as an ideal example. *Aparigraha* emphasizes a detached attitude and involvement in the worldly affairs only to the extent it is necessary. It also emphasizes rising above sense gratifications, love, kindness, and compassion toward others, forgiveness, self-sacrifice, service to others, lack of enmity of any kind, fewer possessions, and simplicity of thought, word, and action. In *aparigraha*, it is understood that welfare of the person lies in the spiritual and altruistic pursuits, for which engaging in austerities and self-sacrifice in all walks of life is important. Love, kindness, and forgiveness are other core considerations in *aparigraha* and kindness of others has to be returned manifold. Animosity of any kind is to be avoided and even the evil of others has to be returned in terms of good deeds.

Gandhi understood from these messages that equability, selflessness, kindness, non-possession, and renunciation are core considerations in *aparigraha*, which ought to be a central theme in any religion. Gandhi goes on to say that "word like *aparigraha* (non-possession) and *samabhava* (equability) gripped me. How to cultivate and preserve that equability was the question. How was one to treat alike insulting, insolent, and corrupt officials, co-workers of yesterday raising meaningless opposition, and men who had always been good to one? How was one to divest oneself of all possessions?... Straight came the answer: I could not follow Him unless I gave up all I had."⁵³ Henceforth, Gandhi decided to consider himself a *vanaprasthi*⁵⁴ and only a "trustee" of all his possessions. He also understood that non-possession and equability presupposed a permanent change of attitude and a change of the heart.⁵⁵

Compassion

Gandhi credits Rajchandra for learning from him the true meaning of compassion and its proper practice. He understood that true compassion did not mean just love and generosity toward others, but also entailed sincere efforts for bringing fairness, justice, and joy to all. Each person had to perform own duty diligently, with a view to what was just, right, enabling, and in the best interest of all. Even when pain was caused to others (like, when parents discipline the children), three conditions had to be met to make certain that the inflicted pain was out of compassion and not out of anger, hatred, or egotistical attitude: 1) the motive in inflicting the pain had to be absolutely selfless and drawn out of noble concerns, 2) the inflicted pain had to hurt the inflictor more than on whom it was inflicted, and 3) the application of the pain had to be free of all hypocritical feelings. Regarding hypocrites, Rajchandra used to say that he could bear being transfixed with spears, but could not bear being stabbed with the spears of lies and hypocrisies. Rajchandra also grieved for

people's sufferings and advised his followers to consider who drove them to the suffering. He was troubled by the prevalent oppression in the world and the passing irreligion everywhere in the name of religion.⁵⁶

Gandhi says that he imbibed these lessons of Rajchandra and that his own conceptions, strategies, and plans of *ahimsa* and Satyagraha were based on this learning. He elaborates that initial steps in the achievement of true compassion are self-discipline and lack of anger or hatred toward anyone. Attitudes of respect and devotion toward others were other important elements in true compassion, of which Rajchandra was an ideal embodiment.⁵⁷

Dharma

Another reason for Gandhi to feel indebted to Rajchandra was in terms the lessons he learned from him relative to the conception and practice of *dharma*.⁵⁸ Rajchandra lived the life of a *mumukshu*⁵⁹ and conducted his household affairs, business, and spiritual affairs the same way with an attitude of detachment and focus on the ultimate goal of *moksha*.⁶⁰ He demonstrated that application of *dharma* was equally possible in one's life as a householder, in the business dealings, and in the spiritual pursuits. He showed that if a person was devoted to *dharma*, then this spirit was evident in one's all actions and in all spheres of life. *Dharma* was not something to be observed on special occasions, on religious days, or only in temples, mosques, and churches. The following of *dharma* was an ongoing duty, meant for each moment of life and in all area of living. The person who was wise and advanced in the sphere of *dharma*, was also likely to be wise and advanced in other affairs.⁶¹

Gandhi learned from Rajchandra that *dharma* was the same in secular and religious spheres and applied to physical, mental, moral, and spiritual aspects of living. *Dharma* was main guiding force in one's conduct and did not change with time, people, or circumstances. He explains:⁶²

"It is generally believed that the spheres of practical affairs or business and spiritual pursuits are distinct from and incompatible with each other, that it is madness to introduce *dharma* into business, for we should succeed in neither if we made any such attempt... If this belief is not false, then there is no hope for us at all. There is not a single concern or sphere of practical affairs from where *dharma* can be kept out."

Gandhi also learned from Rajchandra that *dharma* was essentially a matter of the soul and expressed through one's actions. It was not bound by any particular dogmas, philosophies, or faiths and remained the same irrespective of these. Rajchandra explained that *dharma* did not mean following any particular faith or creed, nor reading and learning the *shastras*, and nor believing all that the different scriptures proclaimed. *Dharma* was actually a quality of the soul and was present visibly and invisibly in each human being. Through *dharma* one knew self, one's duty in life, and one's true relationship with other human beings and God. Knowing *dharma* required knowledge of the self and it also was a means by which one knew the self. *Dharma* came naturally to each human being and nature of *dharma* did not change. No scripture or religion recommended that one should commit violence or not speak the truth. Though it is true that different religions have expressed their teachings and proclaimed the supremacy of God in own ways. Hinduism proclaims God as both personal and impersonal Supreme, Koran asserts that God is one and alone and that nothing beside Him exists, and the Bible says: "I and my Father are one." These statements though different, yet proclaim the same one Truth. Only imperfect people, expounding and interpreting Truth from their particular positions and perspectives, have erected variegated prisons from where an escape is difficult. Ultimately, it is the soul which has to gain freedom from these prisons and win *moksha* through own efforts.⁶³

Spiritual Yearnings

Spiritual yearnings came early to Gandhi. Even as a boy, he had a religious orientation and was dutiful, truthful, and devoted to his parents and elders. He learned early to carry out the orders of the elders, without scanning their faults or shortcomings.⁶⁴ He was much influenced through his regular visits to the temple in Haveli, the discourses visiting holy people had with his father, and the morality-oriented plays he watched as a boy (e.g., *Shravana Pitribhakda Nataka*⁶⁵ and *Harishchandra*⁶⁶). Even more important influences on his life were those of his mother Putlibai and the housemaid Rambha. About his mother, Gandhi remarks:⁶⁷

"The outstanding impression my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness. She was deeply religious. She would not think of taking her meals without her daily prayers. .. As far as my memory can go back, I do not remember her having ever missed the *chaturmas*.⁶⁸ She would take the hardest vows and keep them without flinching. Illness was no excuse for relaxing them. I can recall her once falling ill when she was observing the *chandrayana*,⁶⁹ but the illness was not allowed to interrupt the observance."

Rambha was much older than Gandhi, but was like a friend to him. Gandhi used to share with her his fears of ghosts, spirits, and snakes. It was Rambha who first recommended to Gandhi that he should learn *Ramnama*⁷⁰ and recite it whenever facing the fears. He shares: "I think that it is due to the seed sown by that good woman Rambha that today *Ramnama* is an infallible remedy for me."⁷¹ Later Gandhi also learned *Rama Raksha*⁷² and started listening to the recitations of *Ramayana*⁷³ and *Bhagavat*⁷⁴. *Ramayana* and *Bhagavat*, further evoked Gandhi's religious interests and kindled his spiritual yearnings. Regarding *Ramayana*, he mentions: "Today I regard the *Ramayana* of Tulasidas as the greatest book in all devotional literature."⁷⁵ He was also very appreciative of the *Bhagavat*.⁷⁶

From these different sources, Gandhi understood that one's life was to be based on some solid spiritual principles and that the following of Truth, compassion, and service to others were to be the key guiding motives in life. He, however, laments that the school system did not provide him the needed religious knowledge and that "I may say that I failed to get from the teachers what they could have given me without any effort on their part. And yet I kept on picking up things here and there from my surroundings."⁷⁷ It was later in England that Gandhi was able to systematically pick up his religious interests and he engaged himself in a comparative study of Hinduism and other religions. Now he started reading the texts of different religions and gained much by way of spiritual insights.⁷⁸ This habit he continued in South Africa and India for the rest of his life.

Upon his return to India from England, Gandhi visited Rajchandra regularly and discussed with him his religious and spiritual yearnings. He learned many lessons from Rajchandra through the discourses he had with him. Rajchandra himself had an early awakening relative to his religious and spiritual pursuits⁷⁹ and Gandhi learned from him that one had to be consciously, constantly, and vigorously devoted to these pursuits in order to attain self-realization and ultimately *moksha*. Rajchandra was a living example before Gandhi in this regard and he needed to go no further for any additional spiritual guidance. Rajchandra believed in a practical religion and he advised Gandhi and others that one should not feel overly concerned about the teachings, dogmas, and philosophies of any particular religion and should pay more attention to own thoughts, speech, and actions on a moment-by-moment and day-by-day basis. One's natural religious environment was better than a foreign one, but one should not get confined within the walled enclosures of even this environment and must rise above it. When Gandhi asked Rajchandra which religious books he should read, he advised him to continue to read *Bhagavad Gita*, which was closer to Gandhi's own interest and consistent with his early

upbringing. But Rajchandra also recommended him to read *Panchikaran*, *Kavyadohan* and *Mokshamala* as an added help.⁸⁰

Gandhi also learned from Rajchandra that dry religious knowledge was futile and that one had to have firm faith and devotion in God and prayer in order to succeed in the spiritual pursuits. Regarding his own faith in God and prayer, he mentions:⁸¹

"He has saved me...in all my trials - of a spiritual nature, as a lawyer, in conducting institutions, and in politics - I can say that God saved me. When every hope is gone, when helpers fail and comforts flee, I find that help arrives somehow, from I know not where."

Gandhi further mentions:⁸²

"Supplication, worship, prayer are no superstitions; they are acts more real than the acts of eating, drinking, sitting or walking. It is no exaggeration to say that they alone are real, all else is unreal."

And:⁸³

"Such worship or prayer is no flight of eloquence; it is no lip-homage. It springs from the heart... Prayer needs no speech. It is in itself independent of any sensuous effort. I have not the slightest doubt that prayer is an unfailing means of cleaning the heart of passions. But it must be combined with the utmost humility."

Service to Humanity and Self

Finally, Gandhi learned from Rajchandra that the two-fold purpose of life was service to humanity and self and service to humanity takes precedence over service to self. Even goals like self-purification, self-realization, spiritual growth, and *moksha* are to be attained through service to others and Gandhi explains:⁸⁴

"If I found myself entirely absorbed in the service of the community, the reason behind it was my desire for self-realization. I had made the religion of service my own, as

I felt that God could be realized only through service. And service for me was the service of India, because it came to me without my seeking, because I had an aptitude for it. I had gone to South Africa for travel, for finding an escape from Kathiawad intrigues, and for gaining my own livelihood. But as I have said, I found myself in search of God and striving for self-realization."

Gandhi's service to others took many forms. He volunteered his time in a medical dispensary in South Africa, conducted educational experiments and served as a school teacher, cared for the wounded in Zulu Rebellion, Boar War, and World War II, initiated and guided the Satyagraha struggles in South Africa and India, and established model *ashrams* in South Africa and India to demonstrate basic values and purposes of living. In all these service activities, Gandhi had no selfish interest.

Conclusion

The influences of Rajchandra on Gandhi's life and endeavors have been many more, but written information about them is not available. Hardly there is any area of Gandhi's life and pursuits which was not directly or indirectly impacted by Rajchandra and such influences have been deep, profound, and encompassing. This chapter has included only substantiated information about the influences and any additions or subjective interpretations have been avoided.⁸⁵

Notes and References

1. See: Preface, footnote 4.
2. See: Preface, Chapter 1 - Introduction; Chapter 2- The Life of Rajchandra.
3. See: Chapter 1, footnote 31.
4. See: Preface, footnote 3.
5. See: Preface, Chapter 1 - Introduction; Chapter 4 - Gandhi and Rajchandra: Questions and Answers; Appendix 2 - Gandhi's Questions and Rjchandra's Replies.

6. In the mundane sense, *brahmacharya* is celibacy or control over sex drive in thought, speech, and action. In the spiritual sense, *brahmacharya* is an effort to attain Godhood and a means for self or soul realization. *Brahma* or *Brahman* is an abstract conception of God and *charya* is to constantly strive for, think about, or be with. See: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. Los Angeles: International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 1986. Also see: Gandhi, *An Autobiography: My Experiments With Truth*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927, pp. 174, 176.
7. Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, p. 171-172.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 174.
10. Regarding his past failures in keeping the vow of *brahmacharya*, Gandhi shares some feelings as follows (See: Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, p. 173): "I realized that a vow, far from closing the door to real freedom, opened it. Up to this time, I had not met with success because the will had been lacking, because I had no faith in myself, no faith in the grace of God, and therefore my mind had been tossed on the boisterous sea of doubt. I realized that in refusing to take a vow, man is drawn into temptation, and to be bound by a vow was like a passage from libertinism to a real monogamous marriage."
11. Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, p. 171-177. Here, Gandhi is influenced by the Hindu thought meant for *moksha* seekers. Ideally four *ashrams* or stages of life have been prescribed: *brahmacharya*, *grihastha*, *vanaprastha*, and *sanyas*. In the last two stages, sexual relations even with one's own wife or husband have been prohibited. See: Gandhi, M. K., *Varnashramadharma*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1962; Doniger, W., *The Laws of Manu*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1991; Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is...* op. cit., 1986; Radhakrishnan, S. and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book*

- in India Philosophy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957.
12. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*... op. cit., 1927, p. 173-174.
 13. Here Gandhi is influenced by the Indian Yogic Thought. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book*... op. cit., 1957; Sharma, C., *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987.
 14. *Abhyasa* is constant practice.
 15. *Vairagya* is a detached attitude. Also see: Chapter 2, footnote 31.
 16. *Tapas* refers to austerities and self-suffering (e.g., fasting) for spiritual purposes.
 17. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*... op. cit., 1927, p. 171-177. Also see: Gandhi, M. K., *From Yeravda Mandir*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1932, pp. 1-3, 12-14; Gandhi, M. K., *Ashram Observances in Action*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1955, pp. 111-112; and Gandhi, M. K., *Character and Nation Building*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1959, pp. 3, 5-6. Additionally see: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*... op. cit., 1986; Bonnee, Michele and Satish Sharma, "Satyagraha, Ahimsa, and Tapasya: Nonviolent Conflict Resolution Through A Reform of the Heart." *Proceeding of the Twelfth International Symposium on Asian Studies*. Hong Kong: Asian Research Service, 1991.
 18. Satyagraha is *satya* or Truth and *graha* is firmly following or holding on to. *Satyagraha*, thus, means following Truth with full resolve, under all circumstances, and in all aspects and levels of living. It also means actively resisting unjust measures and laws through civil disobedience and nonviolent strategies. It should be noted that Gandhi's delineation of Truth is very comprehensive and it is all-inclusive guide for living and conduct. See: Gandhi, *An Autobiography*... op. cit., 1927; Gandhi, M. K., *Satyagraha in South Africa*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1928.

19. *Vanaprastha ashrama* prescribes partial freedom from the worldly duties and responsibilities. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957; Doniger, *The Laws of Manu...* op. cit., 1991. Also see: Chapter 5, footnote 11 above.
20. *Shastras* are Hindu scriptures. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book...* op. cit., 1957.
21. Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, pp. 175-176, 263-266.
22. Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, pp. 39-41, 50.
23. Ibid., 41.
24. See: Appendix 1 - Gandhi: A Biographical Sketch. Gandhi was particularly impressed by *The Ethics of Diet* by Howard Williams, *The Perfect Way in Diet* by Anna Kinsford, and several of Dr. Allinson's writings on health and hygiene. *The Ethics of Diet* is a biographical history of the literature on humane dietetics and it indicates that all philosophers from Pythagoras and Jesus to the present times were vegetarians. Dr. Allison had advocated a curative system for his patients based on regulation of diet on strictly vegetarian principles. See: Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, p. 42.
25. Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, pp. 47-50; 267-269.
26. Rajchandra was a Jain and himself a strict vegetarian. Also see: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
27. Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, pp. 175, 274-275.
28. Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir...* op. cit., 1932, p. 15.
29. Gandhi, *Ashram Observances...* op. cit., 1955, p. 112. One can notice here the influence on Gandhi of earlier read works on vegetarianism as well as of Rajchandra.
30. Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, pp. 174-177; 267-269; 274-275.
31. Ibid, p. x.
32. Ibid, pp. 174-177; 276-278.
33. Ibid., pp. 44-47.

34. Ibid., 47.
35. See: Chapter 5, footnote 15 above.
36. See: Chapter 2 - The Life of Rajchandra.
37. See: Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, pp. 171-173; 259-261. It should be pointed out that all experiments in simplicity and other concepts adopted by Gandhi (*brahmacharya*, *ahimsa*, diet and dietetic experiments, non-stealing, non-possession, fearlessness, and bread labor, etc.) had physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions and were to be applied in thought, word, and deed. Additionally, see: Gandhi, *Ashram Observances...* op. cit., 1955, pp. 112-115; Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir...* op. cit., 1932, pp. 19-37.
38. See: Preface, footnote 2.
39. Haveli refers to a huge building, generally multi-storied, which can serve as the dwelling place of a large number of people or several families.
40. See: Gandhi, *An Autobiography...* op. cit., 1927, pp. 28-29.
41. Ibid., p. 57.
42. Ibid., p. 58.
43. Ibid., p. 30.
44. In particular, see: Tolstoy, Leo, *The Law of Violence and The Law of Love*. New York: Concord Grove Press, 1983; Tolstoy, Leo, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1984; Tolstoy, Leo, *Where Love Is, There is God Also*. Brookings, Oregon: Sandpiper Press, 1987; Tolstoy, Leo, *What Men Live By*. White Plains, New York: Peter Pauper Press, Undated; Tolstoy, Leo, *The Gospels in Brief*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska, 1997; Tolstoy, Leo, *On Civil Disobedience and Nonviolence*. New York: Bergman Publishers, 1967; Ruskin, John, *Unto This Last*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska, 1967; Gandhi, M. K., *Ruskin's Unto This Last: A Paraphrase*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1956; Atkinson, B., *Walden and Other Writings of Henry David Thoreau*. New York:

- The Modern Library, 1937; Atkinson, B., *The Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. New York: The Modern Library, 1940.
45. Sharma, Satish, "Gandhi: A refocus on Life, Thought, and Social Welfare Policy." *Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium on Asian Studies*. Hong Kong: Asian Research Services, 1983.
 46. Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 32... op. cit.*, 1958-84, p. 13.
 47. Ibid, pp. vi, 12-13.
 48. See: Chapter 4 - Gandhi and Rajchandra: Questions and Answers; Appendix 2 - Gandhi's Questions and Rajchandra's Replies.
 49. Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 32... op. cit.*, 1958-84, pp. 94-376.
 50. See: Gandhi, M. K., *Satyagraha in South Africa*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1928; Gandhi, *An Autobiography... op. cit.*, 1927; Gandhi, *Ashram Observances... op. cit.*, 1955.
 51. Gandhi, *Ashram Observances... op. cit.*, 1955, p. 116.
 52. *Aparigraha* is a comprehensive concept, which means non-possession at the physical, mental, and spiritual levels and to be practiced in thought, word, and deed. See: Chapter 2 - The Life of Rajchandra; Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
 53. Gandhi, *An Autobiography... op. cit.*, 1927, p. 221.
 54. See: Chapter 5, footnotes 11 and 19 above.
 55. Gandhi, *An Autobiography... op. cit.*, 1927, p. 222.
 56. Indicated in a speech by Gandhi at the birth anniversary of Rajchandra. This speech runs almost eight printed pages. The main themes in the speech were self-discipline, compassion, and removal of Satanic forces. See: Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 32... op. cit.*, 1958-84, pp. 427-35. Also see: Navajivan, November 24, 1921.
 57. Ibid.

58. *Dharma* refers to one's worldly and spiritual duties and responsibilities and these are prescribed by both the scriptures and existing traditions. Also see: Chapter 2, footnote 62.
59. See: Chapter 2, footnote 45; Preface, footnote 4.
60. See: Chapter 2 - The Life of Rajchandra.
61. Government of India, *The Collected Works... Vol. 32... op. cit.*, 1958-84, p. 8.
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-13.
64. Gandhi, *An Autobiography... op. cit.*, 1927, pp. 5-6.
65. *Shravana Pitribhakda Nataka* tells the story of a son, who got killed while serving his blind parents. The book left deep impression on Gandhi on the subject of service to parents and he decided to emulate Shravan in his own life. See: *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
66. *Harishchandra* is a play about an emperor, who lost his kingdom, wealth, wife, and child while trying to follow the path of truth and Gandhi decided to follow this illustrious example in his own life. See: *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
67. Gandhi, *An Autobiography... op. cit.*, 1927, p. 4.
68. *Chaturmas* is a prescribed period of fasting during four months of the rainy season in India.
69. *Chandrayana* is a fast in which daily food-intake increases or decreases according to the waxes and wanes of the moon.
70. *Ramnama* contains devotional renderings in verse form to the deity Rama, which are repeatedly recited for self-purification and protection from evil forces.
71. Gandhi, *An Autobiography... op. cit.*, 1927, p. 27.
72. *Rama Raksha* also contains devotional renderings to the deity Rama in verse form, which are repeatedly recited for self-purification and protection from evil forces.
73. *Ramayana* is popular Hindu epic dealing with the life and achievements of the deity Rama, an incarnation of God who destroyed the demons and established peace and justice on this earth. *Ramayana* is also about the eternal

fight between "good" and "evil," in which ultimately good is always victorious.

74. *Bhagavat*, an epic philosophical and literary classic, is the most complete exposition of the Vedic knowledge.
75. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*... op. cit., 1927, p. 28.
76. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
78. See: Chapter 5, footnote 43 above. Some other texts read by Gandhi were: Narnadashankar's *Dharman Vichar*, Max Muller's *India - What Can It Teach Us?*, Sir Arnold's *The Song Celestial and The Light of Asia*, Washington Irving's *Life of Mahomed and His Successors*, Carlyle's panegyric on the Prophet, and the translation of the *Upnishads* by the Theosophical Society. Gandhi also read *The Sayings of Zarathustra*. See: *Ibid.*, pp. 132-133.
79. See: Chapter 2 - The Life of Rajchandra.
80. Government of India, *The Collected Works*... Vol. 32... op. cit., 1958-84, pp. 11-13.
81. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*... op. cit., 1927, p. 60-61.
82. *Ibid.*
83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*, p.132. 85.

Gandhi's own writings, speeches, and addresses is the only main source of information on Rajchandra's influences on him.

Chapter 6

Philosophy of Six Padas¹

It has been indicated earlier that Rajchandra was a born-poet and he started composing poetry in Gujarati language at the tender age of eight.² One example of his works has been included in Chapter 2, footnote 26.³ Here is another example of Rajchandra's writings in the form of a letter⁴ about soul and six spiritual steps in Jain path to attain *moksha* or *kevalya*.⁵ Rajchandra's another work, *Atma-Siddhi*⁶, has been included in the next chapter.

Soul Conception

Soul conception differs in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism and a brief background of this subject is necessary in order to put the contents of Rajchandra's letter in a proper perspective.

Hinduism

In Hinduism, five themes have been considered important in the discussion of soul. These are: soul's nature, its embodied existence, its transmigration, its ultimate liberation, and its relationship with the Supreme Being. These topics have been elaborately discussed in many ancient and recent Hindu scriptures. However the most comprehensive elucidation of the themes appears in *Bhagavad Gita*⁷ - the revered text of all Hindus. The scene for the presentation of *Bhagavad Gita* was the holy battlefield of Kurukshetra,⁸

where huge armies of cousin brothers Kaurvas and Pandavas had gathered to fight a war along with their many friends, allies and sympathizers. Just when the war was about to begin and first arrows shot, Arjuna⁹ asks Lord Krishna¹⁰ to guide his chariot to the middle of the two armies so that he may see who had come eager to fight and with whom he had to deal with. There in the battlefield, Arjuna sees his own great-grandfathers, grandfathers, fathers, brothers, fathers-in-law, friends, sons, grandsons, sympathizers, and well-wishers, standing on opposite sides ready to combat. Arjuna is overwhelmed with compassion for the lives of the gathered warriors and becomes bewildered. He puts his bow and arrows aside and tells Lord Krishna that for no heavenly or worldly gains he will fight this war. At that moment, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna of his holy duty in an effort to prepare him for the war. *Bhagavad Gita* was spoken in the form a dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna and the topic of soul figured prominently in this conversation.¹¹ Lord Krishna spoke to Arjuna as follows:¹²

(O Arjuna) while speaking the learned words, you are mourning for what is not worthy of grief. Those who are wise, lament neither for the living nor for the dead. Never was a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings, nor in the future shall any of us cease to be. As embodied soul continuously passes in this body from boyhood to youth to old age, soul similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such changes. Those who are seers of truth have concluded that of the non-existent material body there is no endurance and of the eternal soul there is no change. This they have concluded by studying inner nature of both. That which pervades the entire body, you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul. The material body of the indestructible, immeasurable, and eternal living entity is sure to come to an end. Therefore, fight O descendent of Bharata. Neither he who thinks the living entity the slayer, nor he who thinks

it slain is in true knowledge, for self slays not nor is slain. For soul, there is neither birth nor death at any time. Soul has not come into being, as it is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, and primeval. Soul is not slain, when body is slain. O Pratha, how can a person, who knows that soul is indestructible, eternal, unborn, and immutable, kill anyone or cause anyone to kill. Just as a person puts on new garments giving up old ones, soul likewise accepts new material bodies giving up the useless ones. Soul can never be cut to pieces by any weapon, nor burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind. Soul is unbreakable and insoluble and can neither be burned nor dried. Soul is everlasting, present everywhere, unchangeable, immovable, and eternally the same. It is said that soul is invisible and inconceivable. Knowing this, you should not grieve for the body.

Soul, thus, has been described in *Bhagavad Gita* as unborn, eternal, indestructible, immutable, unchangeable, primeval, and distinct from perishable body. Soul has also been described as *sat* (true), *chit* (conscious), and *anand* (blissful). It is divine, pure, situated in own knowledge and self-enlightened when not contaminated. In comparison, body is temporary, inert, and functionally charged by the power of soul. Body, however, serves as an abode of soul and is a vehicle for its ultimate liberation. Contamination of soul and its resultant transmigration through thousands of births and deaths is due to the influences of *maya* (later described as inferior *prakriti* of the Supreme Being), due to which soul forgets its true divine nature and develops false ego or *ahankara*. In this contaminated state, soul falsely assumes itself to be the product of material forces, that it is the body, and is the creator of other material manifestations. Soul in this state considers itself to be the enjoyer/sufferer of *karmas* (material activities) and thus gets bonded with the fruits of *karmas* in association with multitudes of desires, attachments, and passions. So long as desires, attachments, and passions persist, transmigration of soul through thousands of births and

deaths is inevitable. *Moksha* or liberation finally comes when soul recognizes its true divine nature, disassociates from the bodily conceptions, gets rid of false ego or *ahankara*, and rises above material trappings of desires, attachments, and passions. The stated paths for *moksha* are many and have been described at length in *Bhagavad Gita* and other Hindu scriptures. These include: *samkhya yoga* or analytical approach whereby soul develops analytical awareness of divine and material nature of different creations, including its own nature; *jnana yoga* or knowledge approach whereby soul develops true knowledge of self and its position in relation to the Supreme Being and other divine and material forces; *bhakti yoga* or devotional approach whereby soul surrenders all fruits of the activities to the will of the Supreme Being and thus becomes free of their binding nature; and *karam yoga* or selfless-action approach whereby soul learns to perform all actions without desiring results of them. *Bhagavad Gita* also describes the yogic practices¹³ and other classical and folk ways of purifying soul.¹⁴

Bhaktivedanta explains in addition that it is essential to understand five fundamental truths relative to the soul phenomenon mentioned in *Bhagavad Gita*: *ishvara*¹⁵ - the Supreme Being, *jivas* and *ajivas* - living and non-living beings in the universe, *prakriti* - material and divine nature of the Supreme Being, *kala* - duration of existence of the material manifestations, and *karmas* - material activities. Of these, *ishvara*, *jivas*, *prakriti*, and *kala* are timeless and eternal; *karmas* are not. *Ishvara* is the owner and controller of everything in the universe and in Him *jivas*, *prakriti*, *kala*, and *karma* are all situated. Lord Krishna says in *Bhagavad Gita*: "O conqueror of wealth (Arjuna), there is no truth superior to me. Everything rests upon me, as pearls are strung on a thread."¹⁶ *Prakriti* is of two kinds: inferior energy of the Lord or *maya* which influences and guides all material activities throughout the universe and superior energy of the Lord as manifested in *jivas*. Both forms of *prakriti* belong to the Supreme Being and function under His control. Three modes

of *maya* define material activities: the modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance. Above these modes is *kala* and through these modes and under the purview of *kala* and the Supreme Being all material activities take place. This process is timeless and *jivas* have been enjoying or suffering the fruits of their actions (*karmas*) through false ego or *ahankara* since time immemorial. Otherwise *jivas* are neither creators and nor enjoyers of *karmas*; it is *maya* which provides such delusional effects throughout the universe. As soon as soul recognizes this fact and gets situated in own divine nature, bodily conceptions are gone and all *karmas* cease to have fruits.¹⁷ Qualitatively, *jivas* are a part and parcel of the Supreme Being and have His power and propensities (consciousness, knowledge, bliss, etc.) in a minute way. The Supreme Being is above any material contamination, but *jivas* gets materially contaminated through false ego or *ahankara* until finally liberated. The Supreme Being is free to act in any way and no *karmas* bind him. This is not true of *jivas*, who get entangled in their own web of *karmas* and enjoy or suffer the fruits of actions birth after birth. These and other related topics of soul conception have been discussed in *Bhagavad Gita* in great detail.¹⁸

Buddhism

Even before Buddhism was born, Hindu philosophy and practices were being challenged and new schools were being born. One of these new schools was *lokeyata*,¹⁹ of which Charvaka branch was most famous. This school did not accept the authority of Supreme Being²⁰ and emphasized materialistic sense pleasures as the sole purpose of living. The school stressed that only matter was originator of reality and when body came into existence through various combinations of matter, soul also came into existence. When body died, soul returned into nothingness. A famous saying of this school was: "Live well as long as you live. Live well even by borrowing, for once cremated there is no return."²¹ At the

other end of the spectrum were schools which emphasized non-materialism and mortification of body to attain spiritual goals. Buddhism was born in such times of heterodoxy in Hindu philosophy and practices.²² Buddha warned against the two extremes of exclusive devotion to passions, sensual pleasures, and pagan ways of satisfying needs and habitual devotion to ignoble, painful, and unprofitable mortification of body to attain spiritual goals. He, instead, recommended the "Middle Path" to transcend worldly sufferings, end cycles of birth and death, and achieve the goal of *moksha* or *nirvana*. Buddha recommended nonviolence, non-hatred, renunciation, continence, and friendliness toward all.²³ and four set of principles which form the core of Buddhism are: "Four Noble Truths," "Five Aggregates of Attachment," "Noble Eightfold Path," and "Eightfold Consciousness." The Four Noble Truths are: 1) there is suffering in living, 2) this suffering has causes which can be eliminated, 3) there is a way to eliminate the causes of the suffering, and 4) the Noble Eight-fold Path of right view, right aspirations, right speech, right conduct, right mode of living, right efforts, right mindfulness, and right rapture is the way to eliminate the causes of the suffering.²⁴ The Five Aggregates of Attachment are the bases of the suffering and Buddha explains in one his sermons as follows:²⁵

Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unpleasant is suffering, to be separated from the pleasant is suffering, not to receive what one craves is suffering; in brief, the five "Aggregates of Attachment" are suffering... This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the origin of suffering: it is the thirst of being which leads from birth to birth, together with lust and desire which finds gratification here and there; the thirst for pleasures, the thirst for being, the thirst for power... Follow the "Eightfold Path" and walk in purity to make an end of all suffering.

The Five Aggregates of Attachment are said to work through ignorance or *avidya* and selfish cravings or *tanha*²⁶

along with the orientations of attachment, lust, greed, and negative emotions like anger, hatred, jealousy, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Passionate negative dispositions are responsible for the sufferings and continuation of cycles of birth and death - "it is any craving that makes for rebirth and is tied up with passion's delight and culls satisfaction, now here now there."²⁷ *Avidya*, *tanha*, and other negative dispositions can cease through the Noble Eighthfold Path, following of which requires determination, conviction, sustained effort, self-discipline, mental reflection, enlightenment, and nonviolence. The Eightfold Consciousness is of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and of discrimination, constant thought, and knowledge of the self. It is the *consciousness of self* which goes through repeated births and deaths, all else is like a mirage or bubble.²⁸ Body, sensations, and perceptions are perishable, but consciousness of self is everlasting and all-illuminating. *Moksha* or *nirvana*²⁹ basically is freedom from passionate negative dispositions and thereby the end of worldly sufferings and cycles of birth and death. The three kinds of suffering to be ended are: those caused by diseases of the body, mental disturbances, and unrest; those caused extraneously by men or beasts; and those caused by supernatural agents, planets, and elements.³⁰ Negatively *moksha* or *nirvana* is freedom from passions, ignorance, selfish cravings, and other negative dispositions. Positively it is attainment of all-encompassing *prajna* (wisdom and enlightenment) and *kaurna* (love and compassion).³¹ Attainment of the state of *nirvana* is described by Buddha as follows:³²

Then said the Blessed one to the disciples: Everything, O disciples, is in flames. And what everything, O disciples, is in flames? The eye, O disciples, is in flames; the visible is in flames, the feeling which arises from the contact with the visible, be it pleasure, be it pain, be it neither pleasure nor pain, this also is in flames. By what fire is it kindled? By the fire of desire, by the fire of hate, by the fire of fascination, it is kindled: thus I say. The ear is in flames..."

(similarly, the discourse goes on to stress that the ear, nose, tongue, body, mind are on fire and at the end) "Considering this, O disciples, a wise hearer, walking in the noble path, becomes weary of the eye, weary of visible things... And, then becoming weary of all that, he becomes delivered; in the delivered arises the knowledge, I am delivered; rebirth is at an end, perfected is holiness, duty done; there is no more returning to this world; he knows this. About his own state of *nirvana*, Buddha states:³³ When I apprehended this and when I beheld this, my soul was released from the evil of desire, released from the evil of earthly existence, released from the evil of error, released from the evil of ignorance. In the released, awoke the knowledge of release; extinct is rebirth, finished the sacred course, duty done, no more shall I return to this world; this I know.

Buddhism does not mention the existence of God and there is no place for supernaturalism in it.³⁴ In one of his sermons, Buddha thus indicates: "In this very six-foot-long body, along with perceptions and thoughts, I proclaim the world, the origin of the world, the end of the world, and the path leading to the end of the world."³⁵ In the sermon "On the Non-existence of the Soul" Buddha refers to the phenomenon of soul like this: "To begin with the body cannot be eternal soul, for the body dies. Neither do sensation, perception, predisposition, and consciousness together constitute eternal soul, for all these attributes are transitory. And what is transitory is evil. And what is transitory and evil and liable to change cannot be called an eternal soul."³⁶ The disciple is advised to develop an aversive attitude toward body, sensations, predispositions, and consciousness and thus divested of these be free of desires and cravings and end cycles of birth and death.³⁷

Life in Buddhism is relative and a stream of becoming. There is no permanent self and only one thing leads to another according to the "The Law of Dependent Origination" as follows:³⁸

On ignorance depends *karma*; on *karma* depends

consciousness; on consciousness depend name and form; on name and form depend the six organs of sense; on the six organs of sense depends contact; on contact depends sensation; on sensation depends desire; on desire depends attachment; on attachment depends existence; on existence depends birth; on birth depend old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair. Thus, does this entire aggregation of misery arises. But-Upon complete fading out and cessation of ignorance ceases *karma*; upon the cessation of *karma* ceases consciousness; upon the cessation of consciousness cease name and form; upon the cessation of name and form cease the six organs of sense; upon the cessation of the six organs of sense ceases contact; upon the cessation of contact ceases sensation; upon the cessation of sensation ceases desire; on the cessation of desire ceases attachment; upon the cessation of attachment ceases existence; upon the cessation of existence ceases birth; upon the cessation of birth cease old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair. Thus, does this entire aggregation of misery ceases.

Self in Buddhism is a composite of perception (*samjna*), feeling (*vedana*), dispositions (*samaskaras*), intelligence (*vijnana*), and form (*rupa*). All these come into being and disappear according to the laws of *karma* and dependent origination. With regard to *karma*, Buddha advises that even for those who found the way to deliverance there is no rescue from paying for actions. Thus to a murderer who had taken refuge under Buddha and was violently attacked when he was collecting alms, Buddha tells that he was then receiving a milder penalty for his evil deed instead of suffering thousands of years in the hell. Entities in Buddhism come into being only in the sense of becoming coordinated. They are neither produced at random, nor from a unique cause, nor from variety of causes. It is also denied that they are identical with their causes or different from their causes. Through this perspective, Buddha propounds true relative character of all entities relative to their origination and existence. Nothing

new is produced, nothing disappears, and there is no change or motion. *Nirvana* is simply the quiescence of all plurality and no words are available to describe this state where thoughts and feeling do not arise, there is no subject of object of knowledge, there is no turmoil like birth, death, old age, disease, and only eternal bliss prevails. Buddha refrains from attributing positive character to reality, self, world, or changes in the world. No positive character is attached to the series of physical or mental happenings. There is no positive character of *nirvana* either. Buddha is silent on these issues and instead is interested in ethical and moral remaking of man.³⁹

As Buddhism aged, the tradition got divided into Hinayana, and Mahayana branches and different answers were given to the raised metaphysical questions. Hinayana tradition stayed closer to Buddha's original teachings and developed the doctrine of transitory nature of entities and substances. The goal of *nirvana* was prescribed and its nature specified. Popular gods were introduced as objects of meditation and veneration. The ideal was of *arhat*, a saintly person who frees self from the bondage of *karmas* through own ideals and efforts without external help. Buddha, in this tradition, is an ordinary person who developed into *arhat* and serves as example for others. Mahayana tradition developed the idea of a community-of-fate in which living and liberation were collective. The whole creation led a common life, shared common *karmas*, and worked out a common fate for liberation. Thus *nirvana* in this branch is not a matter of individual effort, but lots of outside help is available through multitudes of Buddhas, gods, and other sources. The core concept of Adi-Buddha was developed in Mahayana, who is original, primordial, unborn, uncreated, and unformed.⁴⁰ Then there is the conception of Absolute Being or *bhutatathata*, who is the essence of existence and embodiment of truth and law or *dharmakaya*. *Dharmakaya* transforms into *sambhogakaya* (bliss body) and it transforms into *nirmanakaya* (assumed body). In addition, there are other Buddhas for meditation, Bodhisattvas (Buddhas in-the-

making), and even Human Buddhas at various spiritual levels of development. All these Buddhas can help on the path to *nirvana* through knowledge, faith, and compassion. Amida or Amitabha Buddha can take one to a future heaven or "Pure Land" simply by having a faith in him and one does not need to leave the world, family, or emotional attachments. Whereas *arhat* is the ideal in Hinyana tradition, Bodhisattva is the ideal in Mahayana tradition and Bodhisattvas can appear in the form of human beings, trees, animals, or spirits. Out of their compassion for others, Bodhisattvas take on the task of guiding others to *nirvana* and *nirvana* here is attainment and not annihilation.⁴¹ Thus not only Mahayana scheme was elaborate and rivaled the Hindu metaphysical scheme, but within it also developed various schools of philosophy and their many branches. Some schools preached achievement of *nirvana* through the "Middle Path," others through different kinds of meditative and enlightenment practices, and still others through solving apparently insolvable mental/verbal riddles called *koans*.⁴² Buddhism also became different according to the host country which adopted it. Sri Lanka, Tibet, China, Mongolia, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos are some examples of the host countries.

Jainism

As indicated in Chapter 3, Buddhism and Jainism were born as reactionary responses to some of the corruptive practices in Hinduism and they were expected to be free of blind faith, ritualism, domination of priests, and other complexities prevalent in Hinduism. Buddhism and Jainism developed similar principles and practices of daily conduct and for the attainment of *nirvana* or *kevalya*. However as time passed and through interaction with the more dominant Hindu tradition, priesthood, ritualism, idol worship, and many other complexities crept in the two traditions and today Buddhism and Jainism look very similar to Hinduism in crucial metaphysical and ritualistic aspects. Just as Buddhism got

divided into Hinayana and Mahayana branches, Jainism also got divided into *digambaras* and *shvetambaras* with separate philosophies and practices of each branch.⁴³

The core concept in Jainism is *ahimsa* in thought, word, and deed, in all aspects of life, and under all circumstances. *Ahimsa* applies not only to the living beings (*jivas*), but also to non-living beings (*ajivas*) from the largest to the tiniest creations and Jainism believes that even a stone is a living being with a soul and one-sensed life based on the feeling of touch. Then there are two-sensed, three-sensed, four-sensed, and five-sensed beings and *ahimsa* is to be observed in relation to all of them. The concept of *ahimsa* also includes the concepts of *karuna* or all-inclusive mercifulness and *kshama* or unconditional forgiveness.⁴⁴

Entangled state of soul in Jainism is due to the wrappings of *karmic matter* and to be free and end cycles of birth and death soul must shed all *karmic matter*. In its original form, soul is eternal, free, pure, and self-enlightened, but due to impacts of *karmas* it becomes vulnerable to desires, passions, ignorance and gets wrapped with *karmic matter*. After *karmic matter* is gradually shed off by following Jain principles, soul literally rises into the perfect state of *kevalya* and enjoys infinite knowledge, perception, power, and bliss. Right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct are the three "jewels"⁴⁵ for liberation of soul. Enlightened self-interest, freedom from emotions and desires, freedom from dependence on others, being neither pleased nor annoyed with worldly life, lack of possessions, voluntary rejection of pleasures, and physical/mental austerities also help in the shedding of *karmic matter*. The ideal is of a passionless person who voluntarily relinquishes wealth, position, power, family, and friends to concentrate on liberation of soul. This struggle is hard and continuous and no external help is available either from a guru or a Super Power. Only Jain principles and path shown by the *tirthankars* help and are to be followed most earnestly and completely. Self-restraint, self-discipline, mental/physical austerities are essential to inverse the flow of *karmas* and to

make soul begin to shed accumulated *karmic matter*. Fasting, showing reverence to superiors, control of senses, speech, and intellect, confession of faults, goodwill toward all, compassion, nonviolence, and unconditional forgiveness are some of the prescribed austerities and *karmic matter* literally start burning in the glow of these austerities. After the stage of *nirvana* is achieved, the liberated person can continue to live in this world to help others on the path to *nirvana*, no longer bound by the fruits of actions or worldly duties. In the final stage, the liberated soul transcends this world having dropped all *karmic matter* and having attained the perfected state of *kevalya*.⁴⁶

Consciousness is the essence of soul with perception and intelligence as its manifestations. The former is simply apprehension and latter conceptual knowledge. Things/manifestations are basically extramental realities. As light reveals itself and other objects simultaneously, so does *jnana* (knowledge) reveal itself and others at the same time. The five sources of *jnana* are: *mati* - ordinary cognition which includes memory, recognition, and induction; *shruti* - knowledge derived through signs, symbols, and words including the processes of association, attention, understanding, and *naya*; *avadhi* - direct knowledge of things at a distance in space or time; *manahparyaya* - direct knowledge of the thoughts of others; and *kevala* - perfect knowledge that is all-comprehensive and all-inclusive. The first three are liable to an error, but not the last two. In pure state, soul is both *jnana* and *darshana* - perfect knowledge and perfect intuition. When impure, soul carries with it disturbing media, passions, and emotions, the reasons for the inflow of *karmic matter*. The difference between souls is in terms of the degree to which they are wrapped with *karmic matter*.⁴⁷

Rajchandra on Soul

When Gandhi wrote a letter to Rajchandra from South Africa, among other questions he asked: "what is a soul and

what are its functions," "do the *karmas* bind a soul," "what is *moksha*," and "is it possible for an embodied soul to know precisely whether it would attain *moksha* or not?" In reply, Rajchandra had written:⁴⁸

Just as pot, table etc. are material substances, similarly a soul is a conscious substance. But pots, tables etc., all material substances, are transient and impermanent. They cannot remain static in their nature through all the ages: past, present, and future. While on the other hand, soul retains all its characteristics because it is permanent and eternal. "Eternal" is that substance which is not created by the processes of integration and disintegration. There is nothing to show that soul has been created by any such processes. We may make thousands of combinations and permutations of material objects, but it is impossible to create consciousness. It is common experience that if a particular characteristic is wanting in a substance, it cannot be created by undergoing it through innumerable combinations and permutations. Thus material objects like pots, tables etc., which are devoid of consciousness, can never be made to yield consciousness whatever way they are changed or processed. All these things will only result in producing objects of the same materialistic order. It is thus established that soul, which is characterized by the wise as a conscious substance, cannot be created from material objects like earth, water, air, and space etc. The particular characteristic of soul is consciousness. Where it is not found or which is devoid of it, that, of course, is a material substance. Animate and inanimate, both are eternal entities. Besides the above, there are other methods also for proving the eternity and immortality of soul. If you just ponder deep, you yourself can well realize the permanence of soul. There is no harm or objection in doing so, rather it carries you to truth, to accept the fact that the feelings of pleasure and pain, the desire of getting free from them, thoughts and inspirations etc. are all experiences due to the existence of soul and that soul is

primarily a conscious entity. Since such conscious feeling, willing, and knowing are always present in soul, therefore it is eternal. For a clear understanding of such philosophical questions, it is advisable for you to first read *Shaddarshan-Samuchchaya*, which is being sent. The soul in its pure conscious state, i.e. in the state of self-realization, is the creator of its own inherent characteristics of knowledge, perception, and *smadhi*. But in the state of ignorance, the soul becomes a creator of emotions like anger, conceit, greed etc. that are all foreign to it. Not only this much, under the influence of these emotions, soul, through its instrumentality, also becomes a creator of things like pot and table etc. To put it more expressively, though soul is not the creator of the substratum of earth from which pots etc. are prepared, yet it becomes a creator of the processes which give new modifications to the substratum. This latter state and functioning of the soul is called "*karma*," i.e. action in Jainism and "*bhranti*," i.e. illusion in the *Vedanta*. Other systems of philosophy also refer to this state of soul by similar terms. But solemn and serene thinking reveals the truth that in reality the soul is neither a creator of pot etc. and nor of the emotions of anger, conceit etc. In fact, it is a creator of its own conscious characteristics of feeling, willing, and knowing. The *karmas* which are done in ignorance of one's own self, though in the beginning are merely seeds, yet at the time of maturity turn into trees laden with heavy fruits. It is therefore self-evident that soul itself has to bear the fruits of its actions. Just as by giving a touch to fire you first feel its heat and then pain follows, similar is the state of mundane soul. It also, by coming in contact with earthly objects by its sensuous organs, first gives rise to emotions of greed, anger, and deceit etc. and then as its fruits has to suffer the pangs of birth, death, and old age. Please ponder well over these problems with a detached mind and if you have any doubts please rewrite to me. It is the detached mind which gives strength for abstinence and control and

ultimately guides the soul to *nirvana*. *Moksha* or salvation is the absolute liberation of self from anger, conceit, greed, and other nescient propensities that bind the soul with earthly coils and other limitations. There is a natural urge in life to be free from all bondages and limitations. A close consideration of this urge makes truth of the above saying of the wise men to be self-evident. Just as a man whose hands have been tightly bound with a rope, on being slowly and slowly loosened feels a great relaxation from the bondage and begins to perceive as if the rope has ceased to exist or exert an influence. Similarly soul, which is bound with various kinds of nescient emotions, on being slowly and slowly released from them begins to feel the glory of salvation. The more and more the streaks of these emotions fade away, the more and more the soul shines in its luster untarnished by ignorance. As soon as there is complete extinction of these nescient forces, soul, even though it may be delineated by body, blooms out in its full splendor with a consciousness of freedom all-around. Thus soul, though residing in body, enjoys the blessings of salvation.

Philosophy of Six Padas⁴⁹

अनन्य शरण के देनेवाले श्री सद्गुरुदेव को अत्यंत भक्ति से नमस्कार हो।
Salutations with utmost devotion to the noble spiritual master, the bestower of unparalleled spiritual refuge.

जिन्होंने शुद्ध आत्मस्वरूप को पा लिया है, ऐसे ज्ञानी पुरुषों ने नीचे कहे हुए छह पदों को सम्यग्दर्शन के निवास का सर्वोत्कृष्ट स्थानक कहा है :

The enlightened personages who have attained pure self-realization have indicated the following six spiritual steps (Padas) to be the highest abode of right perception (*samyag darshana*).

प्रथम पद : 'आत्मा है'। जैसे घट, पट आदि पदार्थ हैं वैसे ही आत्मा भी है।
अमुक गुणों के होने के कारण जैसे घट, पट आदि के होने का प्रमाण मिलता है, वैसे ही जिसमें स्व-पर-प्रकाशक चैतन्य सत्ता का प्रत्यक्ष गुण मौजूद है, ऐसी

आत्मा के होने का भी प्रमाण मिलता है।

First Pada - soul exists. Just as substances like pots, clothes etc. exist, soul also exists likewise. The proof of the existence of pots, clothes etc. is found through their particular qualities. The proof of the existence of soul is similarly found through its obvious quality of power of consciousness, which illuminates itself and non-self (substances other than soul).

दूसरा पद : 'आत्मा नित्य है'। घट, पट आदि पदार्थ अमुक कालमें ही रहते हैं। आत्मा त्रिकालवर्ती है। घट, पट आदि संयोगजन्य पदार्थ हैं। आत्मा स्वाभाविक पदार्थ है, क्योंकि उसकी उत्पत्ति के लिये कोई भी संयोग अनुभव में नहीं आता। किसी भी संयोगी द्रव्य से चेतन-सत्ता प्रगट होने योग्य नहीं है, इसलिये वह अनुत्पन्न है। वह असंयोगी होने से अविनाशी है, क्योंकि जिसकी किसी संयोग से उत्पत्ति नहीं होती, उसका किसी में नाश भी नहीं होता।

Second Pada - soul is ever-present. Substances like pots, clothes etc. exist for a particular time. Soul exists in all the three times (past, present, and future). Substances like pots, clothes etc. come into existence through certain combinations. Soul substance exists through own nature, because for its existence no particular combinations have been experienced. Power of consciousness is not capable of origination through substance combinations; therefore it is unborn. Because it can not be created through combinations, it is non-perishable. Whatever can not be created through combinations, can not destruct back into anything else.

तीसरा पद : 'आत्मा कर्ता है'। सब पदार्थ अर्थक्रिया से संपन्न है। सभी पदार्थों में कुछ न कुछ क्रियासहित परिणाम देखने में आता है। आत्मा भी क्रियासंपन्न है। क्रियासंपन्न होने के कारण वह कर्ता है। श्री जिन भगवानने इस कर्तापने का तीन प्रकार से विवेचन किया है : परमार्थ से आत्मा स्वभाव-परिणति से निज स्वरूप का कर्ता है। अनुपचरित अनुभव में आने योग्य-विशेष संबंध सहित) व्यवहार से आत्मा द्रव्य-कर्म का कर्ता है। उपचार से आत्मा घर नगर आदि का कर्ता है।

Third Pada - soul is doer. All substances are endowed with efficacious activities and activities of all the substances are seen to be associated with some results. Soul is also endowed with activities and because of the activities is a doer. Lord Jina has analyzed this doership as three-fold: from the essential reality perspective the creator of own self through inner nature, 2) from the unattributable actuality approach or *anupacharite vyavahar* the doer of material *karmas* through specific relational associations, and 3) from the attributable reality approach the creator of house, city etc.

चौथा पद : 'आत्मा भोक्ता है'। जो जो कुछ क्रियायें होती हैं, वे सब किसी प्रयोजनपूर्वक ही होती हैं - निरर्थक नहीं होती। जो कुछ भी किया जाता है उसका फल अवश्य भोगने में आता है, यह प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव है। जिस तरह विष खाने से विष का फल, मिश्री खाने से मिश्री का फल, अग्नि के स्पर्श करने से अग्नि-स्पर्श का फल, हिम के स्पर्श करने से हिम-स्पर्श का फल मिले बिना नहीं रहता, उसी तरह कषाय आदि अथवा अकषाय आदि जिस किसी परिणाम से भी आत्मा प्रवृत्ति करती है, उसका फल भी मिलना योग्य ही है, और वह मिलता है। उस क्रिया का कर्ता होने से आत्मा भोक्ता है।

Fourth Pada - soul is enjoyer. All activities take place for a reason, not without any purpose. This also express experience that whatever is done, its results have to be borne. Just as one can not escape poisonous effect of eating poison, sugar's effect of eating sugar, fire's effect of touching fire, and ice's effect of touching ice, similarly due to whatever passionate or non-passionate modes soul engages in activities, it must beget the fruits and it does. As the doer of these activities, soul is enjoyer.

पाँचवाँ पद : 'मोक्षपद है'। जिस अनुपचरित व्यवहार से जीवके कर्म का कर्तृत्व निरूपण किया और कर्तृत्व होने से भोक्तृत्व निरूपण किया, वह कर्म दूर भी अवश्य होता है; क्योंकि प्रत्यक्ष कषाय आदि की तीव्रता होने पर भी उसके अनभ्यास से - अपरिचय से - उसके उपशम करने से - उसकी मंदता दिखाई देती है - वह क्षीण होने योग्य मालूम होता है - क्षीण हो सकता है। उस सब

बंध-भाव के क्षीण हो सकने योग्य होने से उससे रहित जो शुद्ध आत्मभाव है, उस रूप मोक्षपद है।

Fifth Pada - liberation is there. Just as through the unattributable actuality approach or *anupacharite vyavahar*, soul's doership of activities has been observed and through the doership the enjoyer status has been indicated, similarly the activities can also cease to exist. Even when passion for the activities is still there, the activities have been seen to lose force, are capable of losing force, can lose force through non-acknowledgement, non-practice, and subsidence processes. Because it is possible to end the binding feeling of the activities, the state of pure self-concept devoid of the binding feeling is liberation.

छठा पद : 'उस मोक्ष का उपाय है।' यदि क्वचित् ऐसा हो कि हमेशा कर्मों का बंध ही बंध हुआ करे, तो उसकी निवृत्ति कभी भी नहीं हो सकती। परन्तु कर्मबंध से विपरीत स्वभाववाले ज्ञान, दर्शन, समाधि, वैराग्य, भक्ति, आदि साधन प्रत्यक्ष हैं; जिस साधन के बल से कर्मबंध शिथिल होता है - उपशम होता है - क्षीण होता है; इसलिये वे ज्ञान, दर्शन, संयम, आदि मोक्ष-पद के उपाय हैं।

Sixth Pada - there is a way for liberation. If the activities were binding by themselves, then freedom from them would never be possible. But counter to the binding nature of the activities, means like knowledge, perception, concentration, non-attachment, and devotion etc. are obviously there, with the prowess of which the bindings of the activities can weaken, subside, and cease to exist. The knowledge, perception, self-discipline etc., therefore, are the means for liberation.

श्री ज्ञानी पुरुषों द्वारा सम्यग्दर्शन के मुख्य निवासभूत कहे हुए इन छह पदों को यहाँ संक्षेप में कहा है। समीप-मुक्तिगामी जीव को स्वाभाविक विचार में ये पद प्रामाणिक होने योग्य हैं, - परम निश्चयरूप जानने योग्य हैं, उसकी आत्मा में उनका सम्पूर्ण रूप से विस्तारसहित विवेक होना योग्य है। ये छह पद संदेहरहित हैं, ऐसा परम पुरुष ने निरूपण किया है। इन छह पदों का विवेक जीव को निज स्वरूप समझने के लिये कहा है। अनादि स्वप्न-दशा के कारण उत्पन्न

हुए जीव के अहंभाव-ममत्वभावको दूर करने के लिये ज्ञानी पुरुषोंने इन छह पदों की देशना प्रकाशित की है। एक केवल अपना ही स्वरूप उस स्वप्नदशा से रहित है, यदि जीव ऐसा विचार करे तो वह सहजमात्र में जागृत होकर सम्यग्दर्शन को प्राप्त हो; सम्यग्दर्शन को प्राप्त होकर निज स्वभावरूप मोक्ष को प्राप्त करे। उसे किसी विनाशी, अशुद्ध और अन्य भाव में हर्ष, शोक और संयोग उत्पन्न न हो, उस विचार से निज स्वरूप में ही निरंतर शुद्धता, सम्पूर्णता, अविनाशीपना, अत्यंत आनन्दपना उसके अनुभव में आता है। समस्त विभाव पर्यायों में केवल अपने ही अध्याय से एकता हुई है, उससे अपनी सर्वथा भिन्नता ही है, यह उसे स्पष्ट - प्रत्यक्ष - अत्यंत प्रत्यक्ष - अपरोक्ष अनुभव होता है। विनाशी अथवा अन्य पदार्थ के संयोग में उसे इष्ट-अनिष्ट भाव प्राप्त नहीं होता। जन्म, जरा, मरण, रोग, आदि की बाधारहित, सम्पूर्ण माहात्म्य के स्थान ऐसे निज-स्वरूप को जानकर - अनुभव कर के - वह कृतार्थ होता है। जिन जिन पुरुषों को इन छह पदों के प्रमाणभूत ऐसे परम पुरुष के वचन से आत्मा का निश्चय हुआ है, उन सब पुरुषोंने सर्व स्वरूप को पा लिया है। वे आधि, व्याधि, उपाधि और सर्वसंग से रहित हो गये हैं, होते हैं, ओर भविष्य में भी वैसे ही होंगे।

The six spiritual steps, said by the enlightened people to be the mainstay of right perception, have been briefly stated here. To a soul which is close to liberation, these spiritual steps come into awareness upon ordinary thought. (These spiritual steps) are definitely worth knowing and their detailed discretion should take place in the soul. These spiritual steps are beyond any doubt, so has been observed by the supreme personage. Their reasoned knowledge has been provided to make the soul realize own original form. The enlightened personages have extended the details of these six spiritual steps in order for the soul to rid feelings of egotism and attachment caused by timeless illusionary conditions. If a living being would try to understand that only soul is free of illusionary conditions, then soul effortlessly awakens and attains right perception. Having attained right perception, soul attains liberation, its true nature. On the thought that joy, sorrow, and attachment are not born of impure, impermanent, and alien feelings in this state, soul constantly experiences eternal purity,

completeness, immortality, and extreme bliss. Soul clearly, evidently, very obviously, and closely experiences that it got united with all extraneous modes through own repeated practices, otherwise it is completely at variance with them. When in association with mortal and extraneous substances, soul does not know right and wrong. After knowing its own true form, the seat of full glory free of bindings of birth, old age, death, diseases etc., soul feels satiated. All those people who have found soul form through the words of one experienced in the six spiritual steps, become free of internal ailments, external ailments, , worldly disturbances, and all bothersome associations, have become so, and will become so in the future.

जिन सत्पुरुषों ने जन्म, जरा और मरण का नाश करनेवाला, निज स्वरूप में सहज-अवस्थान होने का उपदेश दिया है, उन सत्पुरुषों को अत्यंत भक्ति से नमस्कार है। उनकी निष्कारण करुणा से नित्य प्रति निरंतर स्तवन करने से भी आत्म-स्वभाव प्रगटित होता है। ऐसे सब सत्पुरुष और उनके चरणारविंद सदा ही हृदय में स्थापित रहो।

Salutations with utmost devotion to those true personages, who have advised effortless existence in own form, the annihilator of birth, old age, and death. Through their causeless mercy, even constant daily praise of them manifests soul nature. May such personages and their lotus feet always enshrine in the heart.

जिसके वचन अंगीकार करने पर, छह पदों से सिद्ध ऐसा आत्मस्वरूप सहज में ही प्रगटित होता है, जिस आत्मस्वरूप के प्रगट होने से सर्वकाल में जीव संपूर्ण आनंद को प्राप्त होकर निर्भय हो जाता है, उस वचन के कहनेवाले ऐसे सत्पुरुष के गुणों की व्याख्या करने की हममें असामर्थ्य ही है। क्योंकि जिसका कोई भी प्रत्युपकार नहीं हो सकता ऐसे परमात्मा भाव को, उनसे किसी भी इच्छा के बिना, केवल निष्कारण करुणा से ही प्रदान किया है। तथा ऐसे होने पर भी जिसने दूसरे जीव को 'यह मेरा शिष्य है, अथवा मेरी भक्ति करनेवाला है; इसलिये मेरा 'है' इस तरह कभी भी नहीं देखा - ऐसे सत्पुरुष को अत्यंत भक्ति से फिर फिर से नमस्कार हो।

We are totally unable to describe the qualities of such true personage, by merely accepting the words of whom the soul form achievable through the six spiritual steps effortlessly manifests and through the manifestation of which the person achieves complete bliss through all times and becomes fearless. Without any own desire and through causeless mercy alone, (such personage) reveals supreme soul nature and even then does not see another person as "this is my disciple, or this person is devoted to me and is therefore mine." We again and again pay salutations to such true personage, whose favor can not be reciprocated in any way.

जिन सत्पुरुषों ने जो सद्गुरु की भक्ति निरूपण की है, वह भक्ति केवल शिष्य के कल्याण के लिये ही कही है। जिस भक्ति के प्राप्त होने से सद्गुरु की आत्मा की चेष्टा में वृत्ति रहे, अपूर्ण गुण दृष्टिगोचर होकर अन्य स्वच्छंद दूर हो, और सहज में आत्मबोध मिले, यह समझकर जिसने भक्ति का निरूपण किया है, उस भक्ति को और उन सत्पुरुषों को फिर फिर से त्रिकाल नमस्कार हो।

The true personages who have suggested devotion to the noble master, have done so merely for the welfare of the disciple, so that having attained devotion (the disciple) may remain attracted to the soul efforts of the noble master, may notice own shortcomings in qualities, may gain freedom from unrestrained behaviors, and effortlessly attain soul knowledge. With this understanding those who have observed devotion, to that devotion and to such true personages again and again salutations through the three times (past, present, and future).

यद्यपि कभी प्रगट रूप से वर्तमान में केवलज्ञान की उत्पत्ति नहीं हुई, परन्तु जिस के विचार योग से केवलज्ञान शक्तिरूप से मौजूद है, यह स्पष्ट जान लिया है - इस प्रकार श्रद्धारूप से केवलज्ञान हुआ है - विचार-दशा से केवलज्ञान हुआ है - इच्छादशा से केवलज्ञान हुआ है - मुख्य नयके हेतु से केवलज्ञान रहता है, जिसके संयोग से जीव सर्व अव्याबाध सुख के प्रगट करनेवाले उस केवलज्ञान को, सहजमात्र में पाने के योग्य हुआ है, उस सत्पुरुष के उपकार को सर्वोत्कृष्ट भक्ति से नमस्कार हो! नमस्कार हो!

Even though liberation (*kevalya*) knowledge has not yet been born manifestly in the present time, but one clearly knows that it is present as a power source upon the thought of a true personage. It is present in the form of devotion, in the thought state, as the desire state, and as prime humility. With the association of whom a person is enabled of attaining liberation knowledge effortlessly, the seat of unimpeded bliss, to the benefactions of such true personage, salutations and again salutations with utmost devotion.

Thus concludes the philosophy of Six Padas in accordance with the core precepts of Jainism.

Comments on Six Padas

Soul Exists

Directly or indirectly all major and minor religious traditions refer the existence of soul or self,⁵⁰ but a positive identification of soul is difficult and is possible only through its proclaimed qualities or characteristics. For example, it is stated that soul possesses consciousness, knowledge, enlightenment, and bliss and wherever these qualities are present soul exists there. Life in different forms and activities of the beings are also taken as witness of the presence of soul. When life ends and activities cease, it is said that soul has left and no longer exists there. All five grades of life (according the number of senses the beings possess - hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and touching) are said to possess soul. Intelligence, perception, and discrimination are also taken as proofs of the presence of soul. Movement, ability for attention, growth, change, continuation of vitalities, propensities for enjoyment, and propensities for suffering are taken as further proofs for the existence of soul. Soul is not akin to all these forms, qualities, and characteristics, but is inferred through them. Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions go in great detail to describe the nature, propensities orientations,

qualities, and attributes of soul in its conditioned and liberated states.⁵¹

Soul is Ever-Present

This spiritual step is correlative of the first one that soul exists and one main proof of the existence of soul is taken as presence of consciousness in the beings. Consciousness is described somewhat differently in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism and Jain tradition propounds that consciousness can not be created through any combinations of matter. Whatever can not be created through combinations of matter, can not destruct into anything else. Also, only soul knows itself and sees itself and other objects simultaneously. It is both subject and object of conation and knowledge. Whether the beings are liberated (Siddhas) or bonded (Samsari), soul is the same in everyone and it is eternal and ever-present. The liberated beings are free from the fruits of actions. They are also free from bodily ailments, like disease, old age, and mental disturbances. Bonded beings suffer from delusional knowledge and propensities and thus get wrapped with *karmic matter*. Accordingly, they transmigrate from one birth to another in order to enjoy or suffer the fruits of their actions. Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions lay out paths for the liberation of soul, as has been indicated earlier.⁵²

Soul is Doer

In the bonded state soul is doer of *karmas* and carries with it subtle propensities, thoughts, and feelings (*karana kaya*⁵³) at the time of death. In the next birth, these subtle propensities, thoughts, and feelings become the basis of another physical body as well as initial orientations for actions of the beings. These orientations change according to the undertaken *karmas* in present life. Soul only indirectly engages in *karmas* and uses intelligence, mind, body, senses, and faculties as instruments for actions.⁵⁴ Soul is situated in

own consciousness, knowledge, enlightenment, and bliss in pure state and is free from the fruits of actions. In the bonded state and through desires, passions, avarice, etc., soul takes responsibility for the actions and get wrapped with the fruits of actions or *karmic matter*. The paths for overcoming the fruits of actions and liberation of soul are laid down in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism.⁵³

Soul is Enjoyer

Soul enjoys or suffers the fruits of actions through body, mind, and senses as instruments. All fruits of the actions are not experienced instantly or in the same birth. Thus one sees that good people are sometimes miserable and bad people enjoy prosperity. Eventually fruits of all actions have to be enjoyed or suffered, as Buddha pointed out to one of his disciples. Liberation means that the fruits actions cease to have an impact

Liberation is There

Soul in a sense is always liberated, as it is different from matter and is full of consciousness, knowledge, enlightenment, and bliss. In contaminated state, however, soul is delusional and forgets own divine nature. Liberation from the delusional state is possible, as has been indicated before and also is explained below.

There is a Way for Liberation

All major and minor religious traditions mention ways for the liberation of soul and knowing six spiritual steps described by Rajchandra represent one of the ways, enlightened by Jain Jewels of right perception, right belief, right knowledge, and right conduct. Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Jewish Faith, and other religious traditions all present similar schemes for the liberation of soul, though

specific statements, content, and arrangements of advice vary but essential message and guidelines are the same. All religious traditions indicate that one has to rise above worldly desires, passions, and pleasures and make a sincere effort for the liberation of soul. Barren knowledge and empty rituals may be impressive, but are not enough and one misses the point in attempting to do just that. Bad *karmas* flow through wrong knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, and conduct. Any intention to do wrong to others and propensities of lying, stealing, lack of chastity, and overindulgence in bodily affairs serve as barriers to the liberation of soul. Straightforwardness of habits, simplicity, humility, forgiveness, and austerities help and burn the fruits of *karmas*. Fortitude, equanimity of mind, and cheerfulness under all circumstances also help. In the final stages of liberation, one has to transcend not only egotistical propensities and worldly cravings but even the desire for liberation has to be overcome, as there is complete cessation of desires and emotions and total freedom from *karmas* in the final stages of liberation.⁵⁵ Any lingering desires, emotions, or cravings only indicate that perfection has not yet been reached and something is lacking in gaining total purity of soul.

Notes and References

1. Padas refer to spiritual steps.
2. See: Chapter 2 - The Life of Rajchandra.
3. It is a long poem about the "supreme state." Some verses and complete paraphrased poem have been included in Chapter 2, footnote 26. See: Ibid.
4. This letter of Rajchandra was translated into English by Dr. Bhagwandas Mansukhbhai Mehta and is found included in the fifth edition of *Atma-Siddhi* by Shrimad Rajchandra. See: Jaini, J. L., *Atma-Siddhi of Shrimad Rajchandra*. Ahmedabad: Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, 1923 (the fifth edition was published in 1978).

5. *Moksha* or *kevalya* is *nirvana* in Buddhism.
6. *Atma-Siddhi* is Self-Realization. Also see: Chapter 6, footnote 4 above.
7. *Bhagavad Gita* is a part of the epic history of the ancient world presented in *Mahabharata*. See: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. Los Angeles: The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1986.
8. Kurukshetra is presently in the Haryana State of India, not far from New Delhi.
9. One of the five Pandava brothers.
10. Lord Krishna is an incarnation of the Supreme Being who served as Arjun's charioteer in the battle at Kurukshetra.
11. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is...* op. cit., 1986.
12. Ibid, Chapter 2, *Shlokas* 11- 13, 16-25.
13. The classical yogic tradition was propounded by Patanjali who codified many centuries of experimentation and achievement in this field into eight yogic stages or "limbs": *yama* (abstention from injury through thought, word, and deed and through falsehood, stealing, passions, lust, and avarice); *niyama* (self-improvement in terms of external and internal cleanliness, contentment, simplicity of life, spiritual study, and devotion to the Supreme Being); *asana* (various postures used to discipline the body and to practice spiritual contemplation); *pranayama* (control of life force, of which one example is regulation of breath through inhalation, retention, and exhalation); *pratyahara* (control and restraining of the senses and directing them inward to self); *dharana* (fixing the mind on a point of meditation); *dhayana* (steadfast meditation on one object or theme); *samadhi* (complete absorption of the mind in the object of meditation and becoming one with it - ultimately absorption of the self in self). In addition, there are also *mauna yoga* (observing outer and inner silence), *mantra yoga* (constant repetition of a *mantra* or prayer); *laya yoga* (repetition of sound vibrations at certain levels); *hatha yoga* (control of the

body through certain physical exercises); and *raja yoga* (training of the mind in an effort to be one with the divine). Other yogic traditions combine classical, folk, *tantric*, and local yogic traditions. See: Radhakrishnan, S. and C. A. Moore, *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957; Rice, Edward, *Eastern Definitions*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1978; Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is... op. cit.*, 1986.

14. Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is... op. cit.*, 1986 (Chapter 2 presents summary of soul conception and the subject matter is further elaborated in other chapters).
15. *Ishwar* or the Supreme Being is also referred to as Parmatma or Super-Soul who resides in each living being (*jiva*) and Brahman or Supreme Being in unmanifest form. *Ishwar* is also Bhagawan in universal manifest form. The literal meaning of *Ishwar* is controller of all.
16. Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is... op. cit.*, 1986 (Chapter 7, *Shloka* 7).
17. Ibid, pp.7-12.
18. Ibid.
19. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 138; Sen, K. M., *Hinduism: The World's Oldest Faith*. Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1961, p. 63.
20. It should be noted that later Buddhism and Jainism also did not accept authority of the Supreme Being.
21. Sen, *Hinduism... op. cit.*, 1961, p. 63.
22. Ibid, pp. 63-64.
23. Ibid, p. 66; Rice, *Eastern Definitions... op. cit.*, 1978, pp. 75, 79-80.
24. First three "Noble Truths" indicate the philosophy of Buddhism and fourth its ethics based on the philosophy. In "Noble Eightfold Path," the first two principles point to wisdom, next three to morality, and last three to inward concentration. The "Noble Eightfold Path" roughly corresponds to primitive stages in the development of classic yoga system. See: Rice, *Eastern Definitions... op.*

- cit., 1978, pp. 85, 132-133, 143; Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Sourcebook...* op. cit., 1957, p. 272, 274-278; Sharma, Satish, "Peace, Harmony, and Happiness in the Buddhist Tradition." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Peace Research and Education Association in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, 2000; Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, *The Teachings of Buddha*. Tokyo, Japan: Kosaido Printing Co., 1966; The Dalai Lama and H. C. Cutler, *The Art of Happiness: A Handbook of Living*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1998.
25. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 143 and *Encyclopedia of World Religions*, p. 259.
 26. *Tanha* are selfish cravings are not only for worldly pleasures, but also for continued existence and for annihilation. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Sourcebook...* op. cit., 1957, p. 277.
 27. Ibid.
 28. The *consciousness of self* in Buddhism is more or less equivalent to the soul conception in Hinduism, but Buddhism does not believe that the consciousness of self and body are separate entities.
 29. *Nirvana* in Buddhism is not an abode in heaven, it is an unconditioned state beyond the world of suffering, sometimes called the "other shore." *Nirvana* is achieved after hundreds and thousands of births and rebirths, in which wisdom, enlightenment, renunciation, and compassion are perfected. Different schools of Buddhism emphasize different paths to *nirvana* and also describe *nirvana* state differently.
 30. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 76.
 31. Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Sourcebook...* op. cit., 1957, p. 272; Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 85.
 32. *Encyclopedia of World Religions*, pp. 268-269.
 33. Ibid, p. 258.
 34. Accordingly, views of Hindus about Buddha are mixed. Some Hindus think that Buddha took the existence of God granted and he himself was an incarnation of God. They,

therefore, worship Buddha as one of the deities. The other impression of Buddha is that he opposed Hindu ritualism, did not believe in the Supreme Being, or considered the Supreme Being as first cause of the cosmic creation. See: Ibid, p. 81-82.

35. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, p. 143.
36. Ibid, pp. 85-86.
37. Ibid.
38. Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Sourcebook...* op. cit., 1957, p. 278-279.
39. Ibid, pp. 272, 340.
40. This conception of Adi-Buddha is similar to the Brahman conception of Supreme Being in Hinduism.
41. Rice, *Eastern Definitions...* op. cit., 1978, pp. 75, 83, 166, 242-244.
42. Ibid, p. 86.
43. For more details, See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
44. See: Ibid, where the topics of *jivas* and *ajivas*, pervasiveness of life in the whole universe, the suffering of pain by all beings, and plea of *ahimsa* toward them all have been elaborately discussed.
45. As a reminder, belief in the existence of soul and *tattvas* (material elements) is right faith. Knowledge of real nature of soul without doubt or error is right knowledge. Practice of five virtues of *ahimsa*, truth, non-stealing, chastity, and non-attachment to worldly things is right conduct. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
46. For more details, see: Ibid.
47. See: Ibid.
48. These responses to the soul questions have been restated for the convenience of the reader. See: Chapter 4 - Gandhi and Rajchnadra: Questions and Answers.
49. The reader may notice some similarity between these Padas with "Four Noble Truths" in Buddhism. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Sourcebook...* op. cit., 1957, p. 272.

50. Even though Buddhism stops at the level of self-consciousness, an indirect reference to soul is there.
51. Refer to earlier description of conception of soul in this chapter. Also see: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is...* op. cit., 1986; Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Sourcebook...* op. cit., 1957.
52. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life. Also see earlier described soul conception in this Chapter 6 - Philosophy of Six Padas.
53. Different terms have been used in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism to explain this conception.
54. It should be noted that *samkhya* philosophy in Hinduism brings in the concept of *maya* and three *gunas* as partly responsible for the actions of beings. But for the most other fundamentals of *karmic theory* remain similar in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy...* op. cit., 1957; Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is...* op. cit., 1986.
55. J. L. Jaini indicates that there are fourteen spiritual stages in the liberation of soul. The desire for liberation stays up to the tenth spiritual stage. In the eleventh to the fourteenth stages, even the desire for liberation of soul disappears. Full liberation occurs at the end of the fourteenth spiritual stage. See: Jaini, J. L., *Atma-Siddhi of Shrimad Rajchandra*. Ahmedabad: Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, 1923, pp. 20-21.

Chapter 7

Atma-Siddhi

As a poet, Rajchandra translated several classical religious works into Gujarati in verse form. One of these works was Atma-Siddhi,¹ composed in 1895-96 six years before the death of the poet at the young age of 32. The work contains 142 verses, which can be separated into 18 parts according to the themes as follows:

Part	Verses	Subject Matter
1	1	Salutation to True Teacher
2	2-8	Obstacles to Soul Liberation
3	9-22	Necessity of A True Teacher
4	23-32	Non-Seeker of Soul
5	33-35	Soul-Seeker
6	36-41	Liberation Path
7	42-44	Six Padas (Spiritual Steps)
8	45-59	Does Soul Exist?
9	60-70	Is Soul Ever-Present?
10	71-78	Is Soul Doer?
11	79-86	Is Soul Enjoyer?
12	87-91	Is There Liberation?
13	92-107	Is There A Way for Liberation?
14	108-118	Right Belief, Right Conduct, and Liberation
15	119-123	Enlightened Disciple
16	124-127	Gratefulness of Disciple
17	128-141	Summary Conclusions
18	142	Final Salutation

The Text

Here are the Gujarati and Sanskrit verses and their English

translation.² Overview of the themes and brief comments will follow later.³

Salutation to True Teacher

1

जे स्वरूप समज्या विना, पाय्यो दुःख अनंत।
समजाव्युं ते पद नमुं, श्री सद्गुरु भगवंत॥१॥
यत्स्वरूपमविज्ञाय प्राप्तं दुःखमनन्तकम्।
तत्पदं ज्ञापितं येन तस्मै सद्गुरवे नमः॥१॥

I bow to the feet of noble teacher who provided soul knowledge. Without such knowledge, I suffered infinite misery.

Obstacles to Soul Liberation

2

वर्तमान आ कालमां, मोक्षमार्ग बहु लोप।
विचारवा आत्मार्थीने, भाख्यो; अत्र अगोप्य॥२॥
वर्तमाने कलौ प्रायो मोक्षमार्गस्य लुप्तता।
सोऽवाऽतो भाष्यते स्पष्टमात्मार्थीनां विचारणे॥२॥

During the present times path to liberation has practically disappeared. That is clearly stated here for the contemplation of soul seekers.

3

कोई क्रियाजड थई रह्या, शुष्क ज्ञानमां कोई।
माने मारग मोक्षनो, करुणा उपजे जोई॥३॥
केचित् क्रियाजडा जाता: केचिद् ज्ञानजडा जना:।
मन्वते मोक्षमार्गं त दृष्टवाऽनुकम्पते मनः॥३॥

Some people are engrossed in lifeless rituals and others in barren knowledge. They regard these to be the paths to liberation. Seeing this, my heart feels compassion.

4

बाह्यक्रियामां राचता, अंतर्भेद न काई।
ज्ञानमार्ग निषेधता, तेह क्रियाजड आंहि॥४॥

बाह्यक्रियासमासक्ता विवेकविकला नराः।

ज्ञानमार्गं निषेधन्तस्तेऽत्र क्रियाजडा मताः॥४॥

People with confused discretion are attracted to external activities. Such people, engrossed in lifeless rituals, negate the knowledge path.

बंध, मोक्ष छे कल्पना, भाखे वाणी मांहि।

वर्ते मोहवेशमां, शुष्क ज्ञानी ते आंहि॥५॥

‘कल्पितौ बन्ध-मोक्षौ स्तः’ इति वाग् यस्य केवलम्।

चरितं मोहनापूर्णं तेऽत्र ज्ञानजडा जनाः॥५॥

Some people say that both bondage and liberation are illusions. These are the people with barren knowledge and their own conduct is full of delusions.

6

वैराग्यादि सफल तो, जो सह आत्मज्ञान।

तेम ज आत्मज्ञाननी, प्राप्तितणां निदान॥६॥

वैराग्यादि तदाऽवन्ध्यं यद्यात्मज्ञानयोगयुक्।

तथैव हेतुस्तथैव विवेकज्ञानप्राप्तये॥६॥

Renunciation etc. is fruitful only in association with soul knowledge. Otherwise, it is only for the gaining of discretionary knowledge.

7

त्याग, विराग न चित्तमां, थाय न तेने ज्ञान।

अटके त्याग विरागमां, तो भूले निजमान॥७॥

यस्य चित्ते न त्यागादि न हि स ज्ञानवान् भवेत्।

ये तु त्यागादिसंसक्ता निजतां विस्मरन्ति ते॥७॥

Those who do not have renunciation etc. in the heart cannot be with knowledge (of self). Those who are only preoccupied with (external) renunciation etc., become forgetful of the ideal of self.

8

ज्यां ज्यां जे जे योग्य छे, तहां समजवुं तेह।
 त्यां त्यां ते ते आचरे, आत्मारथी जन एह॥८॥
 यद् यत्र वर्तते योग्यं तद् ज्ञेयं तत्र योगतः।
 तत् तथैव समाचर्यमेतदात्मारथिलक्षणम्॥८॥

The signs of a soul-seeker are that whatever and wherever something is worth adopting, he tries to know and puts that into practice.

Necessity of A True Teacher

9

सेवे सदगुरुचरणने, त्यागी दई निजपक्ष।
 पामे ते परमार्थने, निजपदनो ले लक्ष॥९॥
 यः श्रयेत् सदगुरोः पादान् स्वाप्रहत्यागपूर्वकम्।
 प्रामुयात् परमं तत्त्वं जानीयाद् निजतां ध्रुवम्॥९॥

One after quitting own obstinacy serves the feet of noble master, realizes supreme truth and without fail gains self-knowledge.

10

आत्मज्ञान, समदर्शिता, विचरे उदयप्रयोग।
 अपूर्ववाणी परमश्रुत, सदगुरुलक्षण योग्य॥१०॥
 आत्मज्ञानी समानेक्षी उदयाद् गतियोगवान्।
 अपूर्ववक्ता सदज्ञानी सदगुरुरेष उच्यते॥१०॥

That person is true teacher, who has soul-knowledge, is equipoised, has exceptional speech, has knowledge of the scriptures, and whose worldly life is due to operation of past karmas.

11

प्रत्यक्षसदगुरु सम नहीं, परोक्ष जिनउपकार।
 एवो लक्ष थया विना, उगे न आत्मविचार॥११॥
 प्रत्यक्षसदगुरुतुल्या परोक्षोपकृतिर्न हि।
 अकृत्वैतादृशं लक्ष्यं नोदगच्छेदात्मचारणम्॥११॥

There is no one equal to a visible (living) true teacher, who favors like the invisible Jina. Without the goal of obtaining such favor, soul contemplation is not born.

12

सद्गुरुना उपदेश वण, समजाय न जिनरूप।
समज्या वण उपकार शो ? समज्ये जिनस्वरूप ॥१२॥
विना सद्गुरुवाचं हि ज्ञायते न जिनात्मता।
ज्ञाने तु सुलभा सैवाऽज्ञाने उपकृतिः कथम् ? ॥१२॥

Without the teachings of a true teacher, character of Jina is not known. With this knowledge, that (character of Jina) is easily obtainable. Without that knowledge, what can really be attained?

13

आत्मादि अस्तित्वना, जेह निरूपक शास्त्र।
प्रत्यक्ष सद्गुरु-योग नहीं, त्यां आधार सुपात्र ॥१३॥
यत्र प्रत्यक्षता नास्ति सद्गुरुतातपादीया।
सत्पात्रे शरणं शास्त्रं तत्रात्मादिनिरूपकम् ॥१३॥

Where association of a visible (living) true teacher is not possible, there truly deserving depend on the scriptures that do analytical study of soul and other matters.

14

अथवा सद्गुरुए कह्यां, जे अवगाहन काज।
ते ते नित्य विचारवां, करी मतांतर त्याज ॥१४॥
सद्गुरुणाऽथवा प्रोक्तं यद् यदात्महिताय तत्।
नित्यं विचार्यतामन्तस्त्यक्त्वा पक्ष-मतान्तरम् ॥१४॥

Or else whenever true teacher advises so (the study of scriptures) for the benefit of soul, without siding with different opinions (schools of thought) one should constantly contemplate on such advice.

15

रोके जीव स्वछंद तो, पामे अवश्य मोक्ष।
 पाम्या एम अनंत छे, भाख्युं जिन निर्दोष॥१५॥
 रुन्धीत जीवः स्वातन्त्र्यं प्राप्नुयान्मुक्तिमेव तु।
 एवमनन्ताः संप्राप्ता उक्तमेतज्जिनेश्वरैः॥१५॥

Through the control of (delusion-born) self-freedoms, soul attains liberation. Thus many souls became infinite, has been said so by Lord Jina.

16

प्रत्यक्ष सदगुरुयोगधी, स्वछंत ते रोकाय।
 अन्य उपाय कर्या थकी, प्राये बमणो थाय॥१६॥
 प्रत्यक्षसदगुरुयोगात् स्वातन्त्र्यं रुध्यते तत्कत्।
 अन्यैस्तु साधनोपायैः प्रायो द्विगुलमेव स्यात्॥१६॥

Through association with a visible (living) true teacher, (delusion-born) self-freedoms are quickly controlled. By following other means and remedies, those generally become double.

17

स्वछंद, मत आग्रह तजी, वर्ते सदगुरुलक्ष।
 समकित तेने भाखियुं, कारण गळी प्रत्यक्ष॥१७॥
 वर्तनं सदगुरुलक्ष्ये त्यक्त्वा स्वातन्त्र्यमात्मनः।
 मताग्रहं च, सम्यक्त्वमुक्तं प्रत्यक्षकारणात्॥१७॥

After forsaking (delusion-born) self-freedoms and obstinate views, one can live according to the goal established by a true teacher. This being obvious cause (of liberation), is called Right Belief.

18

मानादिक शत्रु महा, निजछंदे न मराय।
 जातां सदगुरु शरणमां, अल्प प्रयासे जाय॥१८॥
 स्वातन्त्र्यान्न हि हन्यते महामानादिशत्रवः।
 सदगुरोः शरणे प्राप्ते नाशस्तेषां सुसाधनः॥१८॥

The mighty foes of pride etc. do not get destroyed through (delusion-born) self-freedoms. Once one takes the shelter of a true teacher, their destruction is possible with a slight effort.

19

जे सदगुरुपदेशी, पाम्यो केवलज्ञान।
गुरु रह्या छद्मस्थ पण, विनय करे भगवान्॥१९॥
यत्सद्गुरुपदेशे यः प्रापद् ज्ञानमपश्चिमम्।
छादमस्थ्येऽपि गुरोस्तस्य वैयावृत्यं करोति सः॥१९॥

Those who follow the teachings of a true teacher and also show reverence to him attain perfect knowledge, even though the teacher himself may not yet have attained perfection.

20

एवो मार्ग विनयतणो, भाख्यो श्रीवीतराग।
मूल हेतु ए मार्गनो, समजे कोई सुभाग्य॥२०॥
विनयस्येदृशो मार्गो भाषितः श्रीजिनेश्वरैः।
एतन्मार्गस्य मूलं तु कश्चिजानाति भाग्यवान्॥२०॥

Lord Jina has spoken of this path of reverence. But occasionally some lucky people know the root-cause of this path.

21

असद्गुरु ए विनयनो, लाभ लहे जो कांइ।
महामोहनीयकर्मधी, बुडे भवजल मांहि॥२१॥
यद्यसद्गुरुरेतस्य किञ्चिल्लाभं लभेत तु।
महामोहवशान्मज्जेद् भवाम्भोधौ भयंकरे॥२१॥

Whatever little is gained through association of an untrue teacher, sinks one in dangerous mundane existence through mighty delusions.

22

होय मुमुक्षु जीव ते, समजे एह विचार।
होय मतार्थी जीव ते, अवलो ले निर्धार॥२२॥

मुमुक्षुर्यदि जीवः स्याज्जनातीमां विचारणाम्।

मतार्थी यदि जीवः स्याज्जानीयाद् विपरीतताम्॥२२॥

Upon reflection a liberation-seeking person recognizes this fact (that association with an untrue teacher leads to sinking in dangerous mundane existence through mighty delusions). A soul, absorbed in own whims, takes this fact to be the opposite.

Non-Seeker of Soul

23

होय मतार्थी तेहने, थाय न आतमलक्ष्णम्।

तेह मतार्थी लक्षणो, अहीं कछां निरपक्षम्॥२३॥

मतार्थी पुरुषो यः स्यान्नात्मान्वेषी स संभवेत्।

तस्याऽत्र लक्षणं प्रोक्तं पक्षदोषविवर्जितम्॥२३॥

A person with own whims cannot be a soul-seeker. Without finding faults or taking sides, here we describe the characteristics of such a person.

24

बाह्यत्याग पण ज्ञान नहीं, ते माने गुरु सत्यम्।

अथवा निजकुलधर्मना, ते गुरुमां ज ममत्वम्॥२४॥

ज्ञानहीनं गुरुं सत्यं, बाह्यत्यागपरायणम्।

मन्येत, वा ममत्वं वै कुलधर्मगुरौ धरेत्॥२४॥

Such a person (with own whims) takes one who is without knowledge and absorbed in external renunciation as the true teacher. Or, through delusional attachment adopts one from own caste as the teacher.

25

जे जिनदेहप्रमाणे, समवसरणादि सिद्धिम्।

वर्णन समजे जिननुं, रोकि रहे निज बुद्धिम्॥२५॥

जिनस्य ऋद्धिं देहादिमानं च जिनवर्णनम्।

मनुते, स्वीयबुद्धिं य स्तत्रैवाऽमिनिविशते॥२५॥

Such a person (with own whims) describes Jina in terms of the externalities of his body, size, glory, etc. without applying

own intelligence and confounds the truth.

26

प्रत्यक्ष सदगुरुयोगमां, वर्ते दृष्टि विमुख।
 असदगुरुने दृढ करे, निजमानार्थे मुख्य ॥२६॥
 प्रत्यक्ष सदगुरोर्योगे कुर्याद् दृष्टिविमुखताम्।
 योऽसदगुरुं दृढाकुर्यान्निजमानाय मुख्यतः ॥२६॥

Even in the association of a visible (living) teacher, such a person (with own whims) maintains opposite (perverse) views and follows an untrue teacher with determination. This he does chiefly to gratify own vanity.

27

देवादि गति भंगमां, जे समजे श्रुतज्ञान।
 माने निजमतवेषनो आग्रह मुक्तिनिदान ॥२७॥
 देवादिगतिभङ्गेषु जानीयाच्छ्रुतज्ञानताम्।
 मन्यते निजवेषं यो मुक्तिमार्गस्य कारणम् ॥२७॥

Such a person (with own whims) takes scriptural knowledge to be a hindrance in the godly progress and own beliefs as the reason for liberation.

28

लह्यं स्वरूप न वृत्तिनुं, ग्रह्यं व्रत अभिमान।
 ग्रहे नहीं परमार्थने, लेवा लौकिक मान ॥२८॥
 अप्राप्ते लक्षणे वृत्तेर्वृत्तिमत्त्वाभिमानिता।
 परमार्थं न विन्देद यो लोकपूजार्थमात्मनः ॥२८॥

Such a person (with own whims) does not attain orientations and characteristics of the godly path, but remains falsely prideful of such orientations. This person only desires reverence of the people and does not attain liberation.

29

अथवा निश्चयनय ग्रहे मात्र शब्दनी मांय।
 लोपे सद्यव्यवहारने, साधनरहित थाय ॥२९॥

यः शुष्कः शब्दमात्रेण मन्येत निश्चयं नयम्।
सद्व्यवहारमालुभ्येद् गच्छेच्च हेतुहीनताम्॥२९॥

Such a person (with own whims) adopts true knowledge to the point of only lip service, does not attain noble behaviors, and remains bereft of the means of liberation.

30

ज्ञानदशा पामे नहीं, साधनदशा न कांइ।
पामे तेनो संग जे, ते बुडे भवमांहि॥३०॥
ज्ञानवस्थां न यः प्राप्तस्तथा साधनसदृशाम्।
कुर्वाणास्तेन संगं ना ब्रुडेत् संसारसागरे॥३०॥

Such a person (with own whims) is neither situated in knowledge state and nor is equipped with the means for it. Those who keep company of such a person also flounder in the ocean of mundane existence.

31

ए पण जीव मतार्थमां, निजमानादि काज।
पामे नहीं परमार्थने, अनअधिकारीमां ज॥३१॥
मतार्थी जीव एषाऽपि स्वीयमानादिहेतुना।
प्राप्नुयान्न परं तत्त्वमनधिकारिकोटिगः॥३१॥

A person with own whims does all for own vanity, etc. Such a person never deserves true knowledge nor obtains it.

32

नहीं कषाय उपशांतता, नहीं अंतर्वैराग्य।
सरलपणुं न मध्यस्थता, ए मतार्थीदुर्भाग्य॥३२॥
कषायोपशमो नैव नान्तविरक्तिमत् तथा।
सरलत्वं न माध्यस्थ्यं तद् दौर्भाग्यं मतार्थिनः॥३२॥

For the person with own whims, desires remain unvanquished, inner renunciation is not achieved, simplicity of nature is not there, and evenness of mind does not occur. Such a person is very unfortunate.

Soul-Seeker

33

लक्षण कक्षां मतार्थीनां, मतार्थ जावा काज।
 हवे कहुं आत्मार्थीनां, आत्म अर्थ सुखसाज॥३३॥
 मतार्थीलक्षणं प्रोक्तं मतार्थत्यागहेतवे।
 आत्मार्थीलक्षणं वदयेऽधुनाऽऽत्मसुखहेतवे ॥३३॥

So far the characteristics of a person with own whims have been spoken, so that such whims may be forsaken. Now for the bliss of soul, characteristics of a soul-seeker will be described.

34

आत्मज्ञान त्यां मुनिपणुं, ते साचा गुरु होय।
 बाकी कुलगुरु कल्पना, आत्मार्थी नहीं जोय॥३४॥
 आत्मज्ञानं भवेद् यत्र तत्रैव गुरुता क्रता।
 कुलगुरोः कल्पना ह्यन्या एवमात्मार्थिमान् ना॥३४॥

Wherever there is soul knowledge, there is the true saint and teacher. Else, it is delusional to follow own caste guru who is not a soul-seeker.

35

प्रत्यक्ष सदगुरु प्राप्तिनो, गणे परम उपकार।
 त्रणे योग एकत्वथी, वर्ते आज्ञाधार॥३५॥
 प्रत्यक्षसदगुरुप्राप्तेर्विन्देदुपकृतिं पराम्।
 योगत्रिकेन एकत्वाद् वर्तेताऽऽज्ञापरो गुरोः॥३५॥

(The soul-seeker) considers the obtaining a visible (living) true teacher as a great gain and follows his advice in unison with the three faculties (of mind, body, and speech).

Liberation Path

36

एक होय त्रण कालमां, परमार्थनो पंथ।
 प्रेरे ते परमार्थने, ते व्यवहार समंत॥३६॥
 त्रिषु कालेषु एकः स्यात् परमार्थपथो ध्रुवम्।
 प्रेरेयत् परमार्थं तं ग्राह्यो व्यवहार आमतः॥३६॥

Eternal path of liberation stays the same in all the three times (past, present, and future). One should acquire noble behaviors, which inspire to the path of liberation.

37

एम विचारी अंतरे, शोधे सदगुरुयोग।
काम एक आत्मार्थनुं, बीजो नहीं मन रोग॥३७॥
अन्तरेवं समालोच्य शोधयेत् सदगुरोर्युजिम्।
कार्यमात्मार्थमेकं तद् नापरा मानसी रुजा॥३७॥

Thinking thus within the inner mind, one should find the association of a true teacher. The sole goal should be self-realization and not other mental cravings.

38

कषायनी उपशांतता, मात्र मोक्षअभिलाष।
भवे खेद, प्राणीदया, त्यां आत्मार्थनिवास॥३८॥
उपशान्तिः कषायाणां निर्वाणे केवलं गृधिः।
भवे खेदो दया सत्त्वे तत्राऽऽमार्थत्वसंगतिः॥३८॥

Where vanquishing of desires is for the sole purpose of liberation, repentance is there for mundane existence, and true compassion exists, there is the abode of self-realization.

39

दशा न एवी ज्यां सुधी, जीव लहे नहीं जोग।
मोक्षमार्ग पामे नहीं, मटे न अंतर रोग॥३९॥
एतादशीं दशां यावद् योग्यांजीवो लभेत न।
मुक्तिमार्गे न प्राप्नोति तावश्चाऽस्त्यानन्तरी रुजा॥३९॥

Where above conditions do not exist (as in Verse 38), one does not beget favorable soul conditions, path to liberation is not found, and inner cravings do not go away.

40

आवे ज्यां एवी दशा, सदगुरुबोध सुहाय।
ते बोधे सुविचारणा, त्यां प्रगटे सुखदाय॥४०॥

स्यादीदृशी दशा यत्र सदगुरुबोधपूर्विका।

सद्विचारः तयाऽऽविस्स्यात्सुखदोऽदुःखदोनृणाम् ॥४०॥

Where those conditions exist (as in Verse 38), one pays rapt attention to the teachings of a true teacher, thereby noble thoughts (right thinking) develop, and thus arises pain-destroying bliss.

41

ज्यां प्रगटे सुविचारणा, त्यां प्रगटे निजज्ञान।

जे ज्ञाने क्षय मोह धई, पामे पद निर्वाण ॥४१॥

सद्विचारो भवेद् यत्र तत्राऽऽत्मत्वप्रकाशनम्।

तेन मोहं क्षयं नीत्वा प्राप्नुयान्निर्वृत्तिपदम् ॥४१॥

Where noble thoughts (right thinking) exist, self-enlightenment occurs. That self-enlightenment vanquishes delusions and liberation state is attained.

Six Padas (Spiritual Steps)

42

उपजे ते सुविचारणा, मोक्षमार्गं समजाय।

गुरु-शिष्यसंवादथी, भाखुं षट्पद आंहि ॥४२॥

उद्भवेत् सद्विचारो यैः सुज्ञानं मुक्तिवर्त्म च।

तानि वक्ष्ये पदानि षट् संवादे गुरु-शिष्ययोः ॥४२॥

That which generates noble thoughts (right thinking), gives rise to true knowledge, and shows liberation path, is described here in six parts as a dialogue between the disciple and the true teacher.

43

‘आत्मा छे,’ ‘ते नित्य छे’ ‘छे कर्ता निजकर्म’।

‘छे भोक्ता,’ वली ‘मोक्ष छे’ मोक्ष उपाय सुधर्म ॥४३॥

जीवोऽस्ति स च नित्योऽस्ति कर्ताऽस्ति निजकर्मणः।

भोक्तास्ति च पुनर्मुक्तिर्मुक्त्युपायः सुदर्शनम् ॥४३॥

Soul is a being, is eternal, is the doer of own *karmas*, is the enjoyer/sufferer of *karmas*, is the revealer of right faith, and is the explorer of own means of liberation.

44

षट्स्थानक संक्षेपमां षट्दर्शन पण तेह।
 समजावा परमार्थने कक्षां ज्ञानीए एह॥४४॥
 षट्स्थानीयं समासेन दर्शनानि षडुच्यते।
 प्रोक्ता सा ज्ञानिमिज्ञातुं परं तत्त्वं धरास्पृशाम्॥४४॥

Briefly these six parts (of soul conception) have been said to be the six philosophies. The learned personages have described this highest ideal (of six philosophies) for the knowledge of others.

Does Soul Exist?

45

नथी दृष्टिमां आवतो, नथी जणातुं रूप।
 बीजो पण अनुभव नहीं, तेथी न जीव स्वरूप॥४५॥
 अदृश्यत्वादरूपित्वाज्जीवो नास्त्येव भेदभाक्।
 अनुभूतेरगम्यत्वान्मृशङ्गत्वेव केवलम्॥४५॥

(The doubting pupil says) which cannot be seen, has no form, is not distinguishable, and cannot be experienced, that (soul) is only spoken of but does not exist.

46

अथवा देह ज आत्मा, अथवा इन्द्रिय प्राण।
 मिथ्या जूदो मानवो, नहीं जूदुं ऐधाण॥४६॥
 देह एव वा जीवोऽस्ति प्राणरूपोऽथवा स च।
 इन्द्रियात्मा तथा मन्यो नैवं भिन्नो ह्यलक्षणः॥४६॥

Or, soul can be considered as the body, the life force, and the senses. There is no sign that it is different from them.

47

वली जो आत्मा होय तो, जणाय ते नहीं केम ?।
 जणाय जो ते होय तो; घट पट आदि जेम॥४७॥
 यदि स्याद् भेदवान् जीवोऽनुभूयेत कथं न हि ?।
 यदस्ति सकलं तत् तु ज्ञायते कच-काचवत्॥४७॥

If soul is different from the body, then why a person cannot

so experience it? If it is as it is described, then why can't we know it like we do pots, clothes, etc.

48

माटे छे नहीं आत्मा, मिथ्या मोक्षउपाय।
ए अंतराकातणो, समजावो सदुपाय ॥४८॥
अरेऽतो नैव आत्माऽस्ति ततो मुक्तिप्रथा वृथा।
एनामाभ्यतरीं रेकामुत्कीलय प्रभो! प्रभो! ॥४८॥

Therefore, there is no soul (the doubting pupil says) and the tradition of finding liberation is futile. (O true teacher), please try to remove this my inner doubt effectively.

49

भास्यो देहाध्यासथी, आत्मा देह समान।
पण ते बने भिन्न छे, प्रगटलक्षणे भान ॥४९॥
अध्यासाद् भासिता देह-देहिनोः समता, न सा।
तयोर्द्वयोः सुभिन्नत्वान्नलक्षणैः प्रकटै रहो ॥४९॥

(The teacher says) because of their close association body and soul look as if the same, but are not so. The two are separate, for their characteristics are obviously distinct.

50

भास्यो देहाध्यासथी, आत्मा देहसमान।
पण ते बने भिन्न छे, जेम असि ने म्यान ॥५०॥
अध्यासाद् भासिता देह-देहिनोः समता, न सा।
तयोर्द्वयोः सुभिन्नत्वादसिकोशायते ध्रुवम् ॥५०॥

(The teacher repeats) because of their close association body and soul look as if the same, but are not so. The two are separate, as the sword is sure separate from its sheath.

51

जे द्रष्टा छे दृष्टिनो, जे जाणे छे रूप।
अबाध्य अनुभव जे रहे, ते छे जीवस्वरूप ॥५१॥
दृष्टेर्नास्ति यो वेत्ति, रूपं सर्वप्रकारणम्।
भात्यऽबाध्याऽनुभूतियाँ साऽस्ति जीवस्वरूपिका ॥५१॥

Seeing all with own sight, knowing all by itself, taking all kinds of forms, and experiencing all without any problem, are the characteristics of soul.

52

छे इंद्रिय प्रत्येकने, निजनिज विषयनुं ज्ञान।
पांच इंद्रिना विषयनुं, पण आत्माने भान॥५२॥
स्वस्वविषये संज्ञानं प्रतीन्द्रियं विभाति भोः।
परं तु तेषां सर्वेषां जागर्ति मानमात्मनि॥५२॥

Each bodily sense has knowledge of only own faculty, but soul has the knowledge of all the sense faculties.

53

देह न जाणे तेहने, जाळे न इंद्रि प्राण।
आत्माणी सत्ता वडे, तेह प्रवर्ते जाण॥५३॥
न तद् जानाति देहोऽयं नैव प्राणो न चेन्द्रियम्।
सत्तया देहिनो देहे तत्प्रवृत्तिं निबोध रे!॥५३॥

This fact (about soul that it has knowledge of all the sense faculties) is neither known to the body, nor to the life force, and nor to the senses. Know, however, that soul supplies power to the body and thus enables the senses to engage in own faculties.

54

सर्व अवस्थाने विषे, न्यारो सदा जणाय।
प्रगटरूप चैतन्यमय, ए ऐधाण सदाय॥५४॥
योऽवस्थासु समस्तासु ज्ञायते भेदभाक् सदा।
चेतनतामयः स्पष्टः स ह्यात्मा नान्यलक्षणः॥५४॥

Soul appears different in all its different abodes and is always visibly conscious. This consciousness itself is soul; there is no other (distinguishing) characteristic of it.

55

घट, पट आदि जाण तुं, तेथी तेने मान।
जाणनार ते मान नहीं, कहिये केवुं ज्ञान?॥५५॥

घटादिसर्वे जानासि अतस्तन्मन्यसे शिशो।

तं न जानासि ज्ञातारं तद् ज्ञानं ब्रूहि कीदृशम्॥५५॥

One knows all kinds of pots, etc. and thus accepts their existence. But one does not believe in the knower of that reality; what should one say of such knowledge?

56

परम बुद्धि कृश देहमां, स्थूल देह मति अल्प।

देह होय जो आत्मा, घटे न आम विकल्प॥५६॥

कृशे देहे घना बुद्धिरधना स्थूलविग्रहे।

स्याद् देहो यदि आत्मैव नैवं तु घटना भवेत्॥५६॥

High intelligence is seen in a tiny body and small intelligence is seen in a large body. If body itself is soul, then this should not happen.

57

जड़ चेतननो भिन्न छे, केवल प्रगट स्वभाव।

एकपणुं पामे नहीं, त्रणे काल द्वयभाव॥५७॥

केवलं भिन्न एषाऽस्ति स्वभावो जड़-जीवयोः।

कदापि न तयोरैक्यं द्वैतं कालत्रिके तयोः॥५७॥

Natures (or characteristics) of *jivas* (living beings) and *ajivas* (non-living beings) are always different; never the same. In all the three times (past, present, and future), they (*jivas* and *ajivas*) remain (distinguishably) separate.

58

आत्मानी शंका करे, आत्मा पोते आप।

शंकानो करनार ते, अचरज एह अमाप॥५८॥

आत्मानं शङ्कते आत्मा स्वयमज्ञानतो ध्रुवम्।

यः शङ्कते स वै आत्मा स्वेनाऽहो! स्वीयशङ्कनम्॥५८॥

Due to own ignorance, soul doubts itself. The one which expresses doubt is soul and on whom doubt is expressed is soul. Soul is self-doubter, is definitely a surprise.

59

आत्माना अस्तित्वना, आपे कहा प्रकार।

संभव तेनो थाय छे, अंतर कर्ये विचार॥५९॥

शिष्ये भगवता प्रोक्ता आत्माऽस्तित्वस्य युक्तयः।

ततः संभवनं तस्य ज्ञायतेऽन्तर्विचाराणात्॥५९॥

The true teacher suitably spoke of the existence of soul to the disciple. Through internal reflection, soul's existence can be understood.

Is Soul Ever-Present?

60

बीजी शंका थाय त्यां, आत्मा नहीं अविनाश।

देहयोगथी उपजे, देहवियोगे नाश॥६०॥

तथाऽपि तत्र शङ्काऽऽत्मा नश्वरः, नाऽविनश्वरः।

देहसंयोगजन्माऽस्ति देहनाशात् तु नाशभाक्॥६०॥

(The disciple expresses further doubt.) Even then the doubt is whether soul is mortal or immortal. It is born in union with the body and destructs with the body's destruction.

61

अथवा वस्तु क्षणिक छे, क्षणे क्षणे पलटाय।

ए अनुभवथी पण नहीं, आत्मा नित्य जणाय॥६१॥

अथवा क्षणिकं वस्तु परिणामी प्रतिक्षणम्।

तदनुभवगम्यत्वान्नाऽऽत्मा नित्योऽनुभूयते॥६१॥

Or, it is a momentary substance that changes every moment. Through this experience also soul does not seem to be eternal.

62

देह मात्र संयोग छे, वली जड़, रूपी, दृश्य!

चेतननां उत्पत्ति लय, कोना अनुभव वश्य?॥६२॥

देहमात्र तु संयोगी दृश्यं रूपी जड़ धनम्।

जीवोत्पत्ति-लयावत्र नीतौ केनाऽनुभूतिताम्?॥६२॥

(The true teacher tries to explain.) The body is formed in union with non-living matter (earth, air, fire, water, and ether),

which has form and is visible. Then who experiences the birth and death of soul (as non-living matter is without consciousness and cannot experience)?

63

जेना अनुभव वदय ए, उत्पन्न, लयनुं ज्ञान।
ते तेथी जूदा विना, थाय न केमे भान॥६३॥
उत्पत्ति-लयवोधौ तु यस्यानुभववर्तिनौ।
स ततो भिन्न एव स्यान्नान्यथा बोधनं तयोः॥६३॥

Through whose experience the knowledge of birth and death arises, that (soul) is different (from the body). Otherwise, how the knowledge will arise?

64

जे संयोगो देखिये, ते ते अनुभवदृश्य।
उपजे नहीं संयोगथी, आत्मा नित्य प्रत्यक्ष॥६४॥
दृश्यन्ते ये तु संयोगा ज्ञायन्ते ते सदात्मना।
नाऽत्मासंयोगजन्योऽतः किन्त्वात्मा शाश्वतः स्फुटम्॥६४॥

Whatever unions (with non-living matter) are seen (e.g., birth of the body), pure soul knows them. Soul is not born through any union and for that reason is evidently eternal.

65

जडथी चेतन उपजे, चेतनथी जड थाय।
एवो अनुभव कोईने, क्यारे कदी न थाय॥६५॥
जडादुत्पद्यते जीवो जीवादुत्पद्यते जडम्।
एषाऽनुभूतिः कस्यापि कदापि क्वापि नैव रे!॥६५॥

Whether soul is born of non-living matter or non-living matter is born of soul, this experience has never been possible to anyone anywhere.

66

कोइ संयोगोथी नहीं, जेनी उत्पत्ति थाय।
नाश न तेनो कोईमां, तेथी 'नित्य' सदाय॥६६॥

यस्योत्पत्तिस्तु केभ्योऽपि संयोगेभ्यो न जायते।

न नाशः संभवेत् तस्य जीवोऽतो ध्रुवति ध्रुवम्॥६६॥

One whose birth is not possible through any union whatsoever and nor death is possible, that soul is definitely eternal.

67

क्रोधादि तरतम्यता, सर्पादिकनी मांय।

पूर्वजन्मसंस्कार ते, जीवनित्यता त्यांय॥६७॥

क्रोधादितारतम्यं यत् सर्प-सिंहादिजन्तुषु।

पूर्वजन्मजसंस्कारात् तत् ततो जीवनित्यता॥६७॥

Tendencies of anger, etc. found in a snake, lion, and other animals are due to the orientations of past births. For this (reason) also soul is eternal.

68

आत्मा द्रव्ये नित्य छे, पर्याये पलटाय।

बालादि वय त्रण्यनुं, ज्ञान एकने थाय॥६८॥

आत्माऽस्ति द्रव्यतो नित्यः पर्यायैः परिणामभाक्।

बालादिवयसो ज्ञानं यस्मादेकस्य जायते॥६८॥

Soul substance is eternal. In spite of the occurring changes in childhood, youth, etc., one has the knowledge of being the same one person.

69

अथवा ज्ञान क्षणिकनुं, जे जाणी वदनार।

वदनारो ते क्षणिक नहीं, कर अनुभव निर्धार॥६९॥

क्षणिकं वस्त्विति ज्ञात्वा यः क्षणिकं वदेदहो!

स वक्ता क्षणिको नाऽस्ति तदनुभवनिश्चितम्॥६९॥

Knowing soul to be of momentary existence one who speaks of it to be so does not last just for a moment (but longer in order to complete the thought). Through this experience also soul appears lasting.

70

क्यारे कोई वस्तुनो, केवल होय न नाश।

चेतन पामे नाश तो, केमां भले तपास॥७०॥

कदापि कस्यचिन्नाशो वस्तुनो नैव केवलम्।

चेतना नश्यति चेत् तु किंरूपः स्याद् गवेषय॥७०॥

Never a thing is so destroyed that there remains no sign of it. If consciousness gets destroyed, one should inquire what it has transformed into.

Is Soul Doer?

71

कर्ता जीव न कर्मनो, कर्मज कर्ता कर्म।

अथवा सहज स्वभाव कां, कर्म जीवनो धर्म॥७१॥

आत्मा नो कर्मणः कर्ता कर्मकर्ताऽस्ति कर्म वै।

वा सहजः स्वभावः स्यात् कर्मणो जीवधर्मता॥७१॥

(The disciple starts expressing further doubt.) Soul is not the doer of *karmas*; *karmas* are done by *karmas* themselves. Or, doing *karmas* is natural tendency of the soul and it is duty-bound to do *karmas*.

72

आत्मा सदा असंग ने, करे प्रकृति बंध।

अथवा ईश्वर प्रेरणा, तेथी जीव अबंध॥७२॥

स्यादसंगः सदा जीवो बन्धो वा प्राकृतो भवेत्।

वेस्वरप्रेरणा तत्र ततो जीवो न बन्धकः॥७२॥

Soul is always free (of *karmas*) and non-living matter binds it (to do *karmas*). Or, soul is bound (to do *karmas*) by God's inspiration, but is (inherently) free.

73

माटे मोक्ष-उपायनो, कोई न हेतु जणाय।

कर्मतणुं कर्तापणुं, कां नहीं, कां नहीं जाय?॥७३॥

ततः केनाऽपि हेतुना मोक्षोपायो न गम्यते।

जीवे कर्मविधातृत्वं नास्त्यस्ति चेन्न नश्यताम्॥७३॥

Therefore, no way liberation (from *karmas*) is possible. It appears that doing *karmas* is ordained for soul and their ceasing never occurs.

74

होय न चेतन प्रेरणा, कोण ग्रहे तो कर्म?।
जडस्वभाव नहीं प्रेरणा, जुओ विचारी धर्म॥७४॥
चेतनप्रेरणा न स्यादादद्यात् कर्म कः खलु?
प्रेरणा जडजा नाऽस्ति वस्तुधर्मो विचार्यताम्॥७४॥

(The true teacher tries to clarify.) If not inspiration from the soul, then who inspires the doing of *karmas*. The non-living (*ajiva*) is not inspirer of *karmas*; ponder on the nature of things.

75

जो चेतन करतुं नथी, थतां नथी तो कर्म।
तेथी सहज स्वभाव नहीं, तेम ज नहीं जीवधर्म॥७५॥
यदि जीवक्रिया न स्यात् संग्रहो नैव कर्मणः।
अतो न सहजो भावो नैव वा जीवधर्मता॥७५॥

If soul activity does not exist, then there would be no accumulation of *karmas*. *Karmas* do not occur through their own natural tendency and nor because soul is duty-bound (to do *karmas*).

76

केवल होत असंग जो, भासत तने न केम?।
असंग छे परमार्थथी, पण निजमाने तेम॥७६॥
यदि स्यात् केवलोऽसङ्गः कथं भसेत न त्वाय?
तत्त्वोऽसंग एवाऽस्ति किंतु तन्निजबोधने॥७६॥

If soul is completely independent (from matter), then why it is not thus seen by you. Soul is independent of matter, when it gains knowledge of self.

77

कर्ता ईश्वर को नहीं, ईश्वर शुद्ध स्वभाव।
 अथवा प्रेरक ते गण्ये, ईश्वर दोषप्रभाव॥७७॥
 नेश्वरः कोऽपि कर्ताऽस्ति स वै शुद्धस्वभावभाक्।
 यदि वा प्रेरके तत्र मते दोषप्रसङ्गता॥७७॥

God is not the doer (or creator) of anything. He is situated in own pure nature. If God would inspire (*karmas*), then he would be associated with the defects (in *karmas*).

78

चेतन जो निजभानमां, कर्ता आपस्वभाव।
 वर्ते नहीं निजभानमां, कर्ता कर्मप्रभाव॥७८॥
 यदाऽऽत्मा वर्तते सौवे स्वभावे तत्करस्तदा।
 यदात्मा वर्ततेऽसौवे स्वभावेऽतत्करस्तदा॥७८॥

When soul acts according to its original nature, then there is (positive) impact on the *karmas*. When it acts counter to original nature, then there is (adverse) impact on the *karmas*.

Is Soul Enjoyer?

79

जीव कर्मकर्ता कहो, पण भोक्ता नहीं सोय।
 शुं समजे जड कर्म के, फलपरिणामी होय॥७९॥
 स्यादात्मा कर्मणः कर्ता किन्तु भोक्ता न युज्यते।
 किं जानाति जडं कर्म येन तत् फलदं भवेत्॥७९॥

(The pupil expresses further doubt.) (It can be accepted that) soul is the doer of *karmas*, but it cannot be the enjoyer. How lifeless matter will know that fruits of a particular *karma* will be so and so (for the doer).

80

फलदाता ईश्वर गण्ये, भोक्तापणुं सधाय।
 एम कहे ईश्वरतणुं, ईश्वरपणुं ज जाय॥८०॥
 भवेदीश्वरः फलदुस्तदाऽत्मा भोगभाग् भवेत्।
 अपर्येऽयै न युज्यते ईश्वरे फलदे मते॥८०॥

If God is the giver of fruits (of *karmas*), then soul can be taken to be the enjoyer. However if God is accepted as the fruit-giver, then Godhood cannot be associated with Him (see Verse 77).

81

ईश्वर सिद्ध धया विना, जगत्नियम नहीं होय।
 पछी शुभाशुभ कर्मनां, भोग्यस्थान नहीं कोय ॥८१॥
 असिद्धे ईश्वरे नैव युज्यते जगतः स्थितिः।
 शुभाऽशुभविपाकानां ततः स्थानं न विद्यते ॥८१॥

Without proving God's existence, world's condition becomes questionable. Then there seems to be no place for considering fruits of good and bad actions.

82

भावकर्म निजकल्पना, माटे चेतनरूप।
 जीववीर्यनी स्फुरणा, ग्रहण करे जडधूप ॥८२॥
 भावकर्म निजा क्लप्तिरतश्चेतनरूपता।
 जीववीर्यस्य स्फूर्तेस्तु लाति कर्मचयं जडम् ॥८२॥

(The true teacher explains.) Through own feelings whatever soul imagines, it begets that kind of body. It occurs through soul's own vibrancy, in association with the *karmic matter*.

83

झेर, सुधा समजे नहीं, जीव खाय फल थाय।
 एम शुभाशुभ कर्मनुं, भोक्तापणुं जणाय ॥८३॥
 विषं सुधा न चित्तोऽपि खादकः फलमाप्नुयात्।
 एवमेव शुभाऽशुभ कर्मणो जीवभोक्तृता ॥८३॥

Poison and nectar do not know (their effects), but the eater begets the effect. Same way, soul begets the fruits of good and bad *karmas*.

84

एक रांक ने एक नृप, ए आदि जे भेद।
 कारण विना न कार्य ते, ए ज शुभाशुभ वेद्य॥८४॥
 एको रङ्कः प्रजापोऽन्यः इत्यादिमेददर्शनम्।
 कार्ये नाऽकारणंक्वाऽपि वेद्यमेवं शुभाऽशुभम्॥८४॥

Such differences as one is poor and another is a king are seen. Know likewise the good and bad *karmas*, because never anything happens without a reason.

85

फलदाता ईश्वरतणी, एमां नथी जरूर।
 कर्म स्वभावे परिणमे, थाय भोगथी दूर॥८५॥
 ईश्वरः फलदस्तत्राऽऽवश्यको य हि कर्मणि।
 परिणमेत् स्वभावात् तद् भोगाद् दूरं विनश्यति॥८५॥

It is not necessary to think of God either as giver of fruits or doer of *karmas*. *Karmas* fructify through own nature and are exhausted after their fruits are borne.

86

ते ते भोग्य विशेषनां, स्थानक द्रव्य स्वभाव।
 गहन बात छे शिष्या आ, कही संक्षेपे साव॥८६॥
 तत्तद्भोग्यविशेषाणां स्थानं द्रव्यस्वभावता।
 वार्तेयं गहना शिष्य! संक्षेपे सर्वयोदिता॥८६॥

Here the significance of enjoying/suffering different substances (including the fruits of *karmas*) through their inherent self-nature has been indicated. O disciple, this subject matter is very deep and has been spoken of briefly.

Is There Liberation?

87

कर्ता, भोक्ता जीव हो, पण तेनो नहीं मोक्ष।
 वीत्यो काल अनंत पण, वर्तमान छे दोष॥८७॥
 कर्ता भोक्ताऽस्तु जीवोऽपि तस्य मोक्षो न विद्यते।
 व्यतीतोऽनन्तकः कालस्तथाऽप्यात्मा तु दोषभाक्॥८७॥

(The pupil expresses further doubt.) Soul is the doer and enjoyer (of *karmas*), yet its liberation is not seen. Infinite time has passed and yet soul is associated with defects.

88

शुभ करे फल भोगवे, देवादि गतिमांय ।
 अशुभ करे नरकादि फल, कर्मरहित न क्याय ॥८८॥
 शुभ कर्म करो जीवो देवादिपदवीं व्रजेत् ।
 अशुभकर्मकृज्जीवः श्वभ्रं, न क्वाऽप्यकर्मकः ॥८८॥

When soul does good *karmas*, it attains godly status. It does bad *karmas* and attains hellish condition. Never is soul without *karmas*.

89

जेम शुभाशुभ कर्मपद, जाण्या सफल प्रमाण ।
 तेम निवृत्तिसफलता, माटे मोक्ष सुजाण ॥८९॥
 यथा शुभाशुभं कर्म जीवव्यापारतः फलि ।
 फलवन्निर्वाणमप्यस्य तदव्यापारतस्तथा ॥८९॥

(The teacher replies.) Just as good and bad actions bear fruits for the soul, similarly non-action (cessation of good and bad actions) also bears the fruit of liberation of soul.

90

वित्यो काल अनंत ते, कर्म शुभाशुभ भाव ।
 तेह शुभाशुभ छेदतां, उपजे मोक्षस्वभाव ॥९०॥
 सदसत्कर्मणो भावादनन्तः समयो गतः ।
 संपद्येत तदुच्छेदे जीवे मुक्तिस्वभावता ॥९०॥

Since infinite time, soul is engaged in good and bad *karmas* through its nature. With the snapping of (the tendency of) good and bad *karmas*, soul attains liberation through own nature.

91

देहादि संयोगनो, आत्यंतिक वियोग ।
 सिद्ध मोक्ष शाश्वतपदे, निज अनंत सुखभोग ॥९१॥

आत्यान्तिको वियोगो यो देहादियोगजः खलुः।

तन्निर्वाणं समाख्यातं तत्रानन्त सुखैकता॥९१॥

Total dissociation with bodily associations has been described as liberation. There soul gets united with infinite bliss.

Is There A Way for Liberation?

92

होय कदापि मोक्षपद, नहीं अविरोध उपाय।

कर्मों काल अनंतनां, शार्थी छेद्यां जाय॥९२॥

मोक्षस्थानं कदापि स्यान्नाऽविरोधुपायि तत्।

अनन्तकालजः कर्मचयच्छेद्यः कथं भवेत्॥९२॥

(The pupil expresses further doubt.) Even if there is state of liberation, there appears no way to attain it. How dissociation with *karmas* is possible, which are (with soul) since infinite time?

93

अथवा मत दर्शन घणां, कहे उपाय अनेक।

तेमां मत साचो कयो? बने न एह विवेक॥९३॥

वा मतानि सुभिन्नानि नैकोपायप्रदर्शानि।

मतं सत्यं तु किं तत्र शक्यैषा न विवेकता॥९३॥

And there are different opinions and philosophies (to do what has been indicated in verse 92) and one way does not exist. I am not able to understand which way is true.

94

कइ जातिमां मोक्ष छे, कया वेशमां मोक्ष।

एनो निश्चय ना बने, घणा भेद ए दोष॥९४॥

कस्यां जातौ भवेन्मोक्षो वेषे कस्मिंश्च निवृत्तिः।

निश्चेतुमेतन्नो शक्यं बहु भेदो हि दूषणम्॥९४॥

It is not known in which caste or garb one gets liberation. I am not able to decide this. The problem (here too) is differences in opinions.

95

तेथी एम जणाय छे, मले न मोक्ष-उपाय।
 जीवादि जाणया तणो, शो उपकारज थाय॥९५॥
 तत एवं हि संसिद्धं मोक्षोपायो न विद्यते।
 जीवादिज्ञानसंप्राप्तौ कोपकारो भवेदहं॥९५॥

Thus it is established that way to liberation is not known.
 Then gaining knowledge of soul, etc. will be of what use?

96

पांचे उत्तरथी थयुं, समाधान सर्वांग।
 समजुं मोक्ष-उपाय तो, उदय उदय सद्भाग्य॥९६॥
 प्रश्नपञ्चोत्तरे लब्धे समाधिः सकलोऽजनि।
 यदि तत् साधनं विद्यां शिवं श्रेयो भवेच्छिवम्॥९६॥

Upon receiving answers to my earlier five questions, I am
 satisfied on all counts.⁴ Good fortune of mine will arise, if I
 could understand the way to liberation.

97

पांचे उत्तरनी थई, आत्मा विशे प्रतीत।
 थाशे मोक्षोपायनी, सहज प्रतीत ए रीत॥९७॥
 पञ्चोत्तरेण संजाता प्रतीतिस्तव ह्यात्मनि।
 मोक्षोपायस्तथा तात! एष्यति सहजं मनः॥९७॥

(The true teacher responds.) Just as now you have faith in
 (the existence of) soul through the provided answers to the
 asked five questions, son you will similarly know the way to
 liberation easily.

98

कर्मभाव अज्ञान छे, मोक्षभाव निजवास।
 अंधकार अज्ञान सम, नाशे ज्ञानप्रकाश॥९८॥
 अज्ञानं कर्मभावोऽस्ति मोक्षभावो निजस्थितिः।
 ज्वलिते ज्ञानदीपे तु नश्येदज्ञानतातमः॥९८॥

Ignorance generates tendency to do *karmas* and through
 inclination for liberation one is situated in own (true) nature.

The lighted lamp of knowledge destroys the darkness of ignorance.

99

जे जे कारण बंधनां, तेह बंधनो पंथ।
ते कारण छेदकदशा, मोक्षपंथ भवअंत॥९९॥
यो यो बन्धस्य हेतुः स्याद् बन्धमार्गो भवेत् स सः।
बन्धोच्छेदस्थितियां तु मोक्षमार्गो भवान्तकः॥९९॥

Whatever are the causes for the binding (of soul) are the ways of the binding. The state of breaking through the reasons for binding is the way to liberation and crossing of the mundane ocean.

100

राग, द्वेष, अज्ञान ए, मुख्य कर्मनी ग्रंथ।
थाय निवृत्ति जेह्मी, ते ज मोक्षनो पंथ॥१००॥
रागो द्वेषस्तथाऽज्ञानं कर्मणां ग्रन्थिरग्रग।
यस्मात् तकन्निवृत्तः स्यान्मोक्षमार्गः स एव भोः॥१००॥

Attachment, envy, and ignorance are the main knots of *karmas*. Total freedom from these is the way to liberation.

101

आत्मा सत् चैतन्यमय, सर्वभासरहित।
जेथी केवल पामिये, मोक्षपंथ ते रीत॥१०१॥
संश्लेषतनामयो जीवः सर्वाभासविवर्जितः।
प्राप्यते स यतः शुद्धो मोक्षमार्गः स एव भोः॥१०१॥

Soul represents truth and is pure consciousness without (faulty) experiences. The way it can be restored to pure state is the path to liberation.

102

कर्म अनंत प्रकारनां, तेमां मुख्ये आठ।
तेमां मुख्ये मोहनिय, हणाय ते कहुं पाठ॥१०२॥
अनन्तभेदकं कर्म चाष्टौ मुख्यानि तेष्वपि।
तत्राऽपि मोहना मुख्या वक्ष्ये तद्धनने विधिम्॥१०२॥

Karmas are of infinite kinds, of which eight are main ones. Among these eight, chief are deluding *karmas*. I speak the way to destroy the deluding *karmas*.

103

कर्म मोहनिय भेद बे, दर्शन, चारित्र नाम।
हणे बोध वीतरागता, अचूक उपाय आम॥१०३॥
मोहनं द्विविधं तन्न दृष्टि-चारित्रभेदतः।
बोधो हि दर्शनं हन्याच्चारित्रं रागहीनता॥१०३॥

Through the belief and conduct distinction, deluding *karmas* are of two kinds (deluders of right belief and deluders of right conduct). Deluders of right belief are destroyed through enlightenment and deluders of right conduct through non-attachment.

104

कर्मबंध क्रोधादिधी, हणे क्षमादिक तेह।
प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव सर्वने, एमां शो संदेह॥१०४॥
क्रोधादियोगतः कर्मबन्धः शान्त्यादिघातकः।
अत्रानुभूतिः सर्वेषां तत्र का संशयालुता?॥१०४॥

Karma-bondage occurs in association with anger, etc. and forgiveness, etc. nullify it. This is the experience of all; what doubt can there be?

105

छोडी मत दर्शन तणो, आग्रह तेम विकल्प।
कह्यो मार्ग आ साधशे, जन्म तेहना अल्प॥१०५॥
मतदृष्ट्याग्रहं त्यक्त्वा विकल्पाचरणं तथा।
आराध्येतोक्तमार्गो यैः तेषां हि जननाल्पता॥१०५॥

One who after forsaking faith in opinions, philosophies, and personal whimsical behaviors follows the path mentioned above, his future births become fewer.

106

षट्पदना षट् प्रश्न ते, पूछया करी विचार।
 ते पदनी संवांगता, मोक्षमार्ग निरधार॥१०६॥
 षषपट्कस्य षट् प्रश्नाः पृष्टाः संचिन्त्य रे! त्वया।
 तत्पदानां समूहत्वे मुक्तिवासः सुनिश्चितम्॥१०६॥

You have, after due thought, asked six questions about the six Padas (spiritual steps). These spiritual steps lead to full liberation state. This is definite.

107

जाति-वेषनो भेद नहीं, कष्टो मार्ग जो होय।
 साधे ते मुक्ति लहे, एमां भेद न कोय॥१०७॥
 जातेर्वेषस्य नो भेदो यदि स्यादुक्तमार्गता।
 तां तु यः साधयेत् सद्यो न काचित् तत्र भिन्नता॥१०७॥

There is no distinction of caste or garb, if one follows the path as mentioned above. One who engages in the effort, gains liberation. It is never different.

Right Belief, Right Conduct, and Liberation

108

कषायनी उपशांतता, मात्र मोक्षअभिलाष।
 भवे खेद अंतर दया, ते कहिये जिज्ञास॥१०८॥
 कषायस्योपशान्तत्वं मोक्षे रुचिर्हि केवलम्।
 भवे खेदो दया चित्ते सा जिज्ञासा समुच्यते॥१०८॥

One whose desires have calmed down, whose exclusive interest is in liberation, who feels sad about the rebirth process, and who has compassion, is called the seeker after soul.

109

ते जिज्ञासु जीवने, थाय सद्गुरुबोध।
 तो पामे समकितने, बर्ते अंतरशोध॥१०९॥
 सद्गुरोर्बोधमाप्नुयात् स जिज्ञासुर्नरो यदि।
 तदा सम्यक्त्वलाभः स्यादात्मशोधनता अपि॥१०९॥

If such a soul seeking person gains knowledge from the

true teacher, he acquires Right Belief and also the soul is purified.

110

मत दर्शन आग्रह तजी, वर्ते सद्गुरुलक्ष।
लहे शुद्ध समकित ते, जेमां भेद न पक्ष॥११०॥
मतदृष्ट्याग्रहैर्हीना यद्वृत्तिगुरुपादयोः।
स संलभेत सम्यक्त्वं यत्र भेदो न पक्षता॥११०॥

One who, after quitting opinions and philosophies, follows in the footsteps of the true teacher gains Right Belief. There is no distinction or favoritism in this.

111

वर्ते निजस्वभावानो, अनुभव लक्ष प्रतीत।
वृत्ति वहे निजभावमां, परमार्थे समकित॥१११॥
अनुभूतिः स्वभावस्य तल्लक्ष्यं तत्र प्रत्ययः।
निजतां संवहेद् वृत्तिः सत्यं सम्यक्त्वमुच्यते॥१११॥

One who acts according to inner nature, has faith in the liberation goal, keeps orientations under control is said to possess true Right Belief.

112

वर्धमान समकित धई, टाले मिथ्याभास।
उदय थाय चारित्रनो, वीतरागपद वास॥११२॥
भूत्वा वर्द्धिष्णु सम्यक्त्वं मिथ्याभासं प्रटालयेत्।
चारित्रस्योदयस्तत्र वीतरागपदस्थितिः॥११२॥

With the growth of Right Faith, false faith gets removed. Then arises Right Conduct and non-attachment state is attained.

113

केवल निजस्वभावानुं, अखंड वर्ते ज्ञान।
कहिये केवलज्ञान ते, देह छातां निर्वाण॥११३॥
केवलं स्वस्वभावस्य स्थिरा यत्र भवेन्मतिः।
सोच्यते केवलज्ञानं देहे सत्यपि निर्वृतिः॥११३॥

Through (acquired) inner nature, intelligence becomes fixed (is not deluded). This is called perfect knowledge and truly one attains liberation while living in the body.

114

कोटि वर्षानुं स्वप्न पण, जाग्रत थतां समाय।
 तेम विभाव अनादिनो, ज्ञान थतां दूर थाय॥११४॥
 स्वप्नोऽपि कोटिवर्षस्य निद्रोच्छेदे समाप्यते।
 विभावोऽनादिजो दूरे नश्येद् ज्ञाने तथा सती॥११४॥

A dream lasting million of years ends with the snapping of sleep. Similarly fallacies of an eternity vanish with the true knowledge.

115

छूटे देहाध्यास तो, नहीं कर्ता तुं कर्म।
 नहीं भोक्ता तुं तेहनो, ए ज धर्मनो मर्म॥११५॥
 देहाध्यासो यदि नश्येत् त्वं कर्ता न हि कर्मणाम्।
 न हि भोक्ता च तेषां त्वं धर्मस्यैतद् गूढं मतम्॥११५॥

When false association with the body stops, then you are neither the doer of *karmas* and nor their enjoyer. This is the deep meaning of religion.

116

ए ज धर्मथी मोक्ष छे, तुं छो मोक्षस्वरूप।
 अनंत दर्शन ज्ञान तुं, अव्याबाध स्वरूप॥११६॥
 मोक्ष एव ततो धर्मान्मोक्षात्मा च त्वमेव भोः।
 अनन्तदर्शनं त्वं च अव्याबाधरूपस्त्वकम्॥११६॥

In the *dharma* (prescribed religion as mentioned in verse 115) lies liberation. Then you are yourself the liberated soul, infinite knowledge, and immutable form.

117

शुद्ध, बुद्ध, चैतन्यघन, स्वयंज्योति सुखधाम।
 बीजुं कहिये केटलुं? कर विचार तो पाम॥११७॥

शुद्धो बुद्धश्चिदात्मा च स्वयंज्योतिः सुखालयम्।

विचारय ततो विद्धि स्वं बहु तु किमुच्यते?॥११७॥

You are yourself pure, knowledgeable, conscious, enlightened, and abode of bliss. Think about this and know yourself. What more should I say to you?

118

निश्चय सर्वे ज्ञानीनो, आवी अत्र समाय।

धरी मौनता एम कही, सहज समाधिमांय॥११८॥

सर्वेषां ज्ञानिनामत्र समाप्तिमेति निश्चयः।

उक्तैव गुरुणा मौनं समाधौ सहजे धृतम्॥११८॥

This is the summary conclusion of all those who are knowledgeable. Speaking thus, the true teacher becomes quiet in easy self-absorption.

Enlightened Disciple

119

सद्गुरुना उपदेशी, आव्युं अपूर्व भान।

निजपद निजमांही लहुं, दूर थयुं अज्ञान॥११९॥

सद्गुरोरुपदेशात् त्वाऽऽगतं भानमपूर्वकम्।

निजे निजपदं लब्धमज्ञानं लयतां गतम्॥११९॥

Through the teachings of true teacher, the disciple gains new enlightenment and finds self-knowledge within self. His ignorance dissipates.

120

भास्युं निजस्वरूप ते, शुद्ध चेतनारूप।

अजर, अमर, अविनाशी ने, देहातीत स्वरूप॥१२०॥

तद भासितं निजं रूपं शुद्धं चैतन्यलक्षणम्।

अजरं चामरं स्थास्तु देहातीतं सुनिर्मलम्॥१२०॥

(The disciple) now realizes his original form, which is pure, conscious, indestructible, immortal, unchanging, separate from the body, and very spotless.

121

कर्ता, भोक्ता कर्मनो, विभाव वर्ते ज्याय।
 वृत्ति वही निजभावमां, थयो अकर्ता त्याय॥१२१॥
 यदा विभावभावः स्याद् भोक्ता कर्ता च कर्मणः।
 यदाऽविभावभावः स्याद् भोक्ता कर्ता न कर्मणः॥१२१॥

(The disciple saw that) when in deluded state, soul is both the doer and enjoyer of *karmas*. When not in deluded state, soul is neither the doer and nor the enjoyer of *karmas*.

122

अथवा निजपरिणाम जे, शुद्ध चेतनारूप।
 कर्ता भोक्ता तेहनो, निर्विकल्पस्वरूप॥१२२॥
 स्वाभाविक्यस्ति वा वृत्तिः शुद्धा या चेतनामयी।
 तस्याः कर्ताऽस्ति भोक्ताऽस्तिनिर्विकल्पस्वरूपमाक्॥१२२॥

(The true teacher further clarifies.) Situated naturally in own pure orientation and consciousness, soul does and enjoys the *karmas*, but stays unaffected by their delusional impact.

123

मोक्ष कह्यो निजशुद्धता, ते पामे ते पंथ।
 समजाव्यो संक्षेपमां, सकल मार्ग निर्गंथ॥१२३॥
 उक्तो मोक्षो निजा शुद्धिः स मार्गो लभ्यते यतः।
 संक्षेपेणोदितः शिष्य! निर्गंथः सकलः पथः॥१२३॥

This freedom from delusion (liberation), as spoken, comes through self-purification. Only those who find this path find liberation. O disciple, here has been spoken briefly the path of all those who found liberation.

Gratefulness of Disciple

124

अहो! अहो! श्रीसद्गुरु, करुणासिंधु अपार।
 आ पामर पर प्रभु कर्यो, अहो! अहो! उपकार॥१२४॥
 कृपापानीयकूपार! गुरुदेव! अहो! अहो!।
 अयमुपकृतो दीनश्रोपकारस्त्वहो! अहो!॥१२४॥

(After receiving the teachings, the disciple says) O true teacher, you are the ocean of kindness. You have done a great good to this poor pupil and I am under your obligation. Oh, Oh (a sign of great satisfaction and pleasure).

125

शुं प्रभुचरण कने धरूं ? आत्माथी सौ हीन।
ते तो प्रभुए आपियो, वर्तुं चरणाधीन॥१२५॥
प्रभो: पादे धरेयं किमात्मतो हीनकं समम्।
अर्पितः प्रभुणा सोऽस्ति भवेयं तद्वशंवदः॥१२५॥

(In return for the teachings) what may I offer to the holy feet of the Lord (true teacher); everything is lesser than soul (soul knowledge), which the Lord has given me. Hereon, I live under the protection of your guidance.

126

आ देहादि आजर्था, वर्तो प्रभुआधीन।
दास, दास, हुं दास छुं, तेह प्रभुनो दीन॥१२६॥
अद्यतस्तच्छरीरादि जायतां प्रभुचेटकम्।
दासो दासोऽस्मि दासोऽस्मि तत्प्रभोर्दीनशेखरः॥१२६॥

From hereon, I will engage this body, etc. in the service of the Lord (true teacher). Servant, I am servant, a very humble servant of the Lord.

127

षट् स्थानक समजावीने, भिन्न बताव्यो आप।
म्यानथकी तरवारवत्, ए उपकार अमाप॥१२७॥
स्थानषट्कं विसंज्ञाप्य भिन्नं दर्शितवान् भवान्।
असिकोशमिवाऽऽत्मानं चामितोऽयमनुग्रहः॥१२७॥

By explaining the six Padas (spiritual steps), you have shown me the separateness of soul (from body), like the sword in its sheath. This has been an immeasurable favor to me.

Summary Conclusions

128

दर्शन षटे शमाय छे, आ षट् स्थानक मांहि।
विचारतां विस्तारथी, संशय रहे न कांइ॥१२८॥
स्थानषट्के समाप्यन्ते दर्शनानि षडेव भोः।।
न तत्र संशयः कोऽपि यद्यालोच्येत विस्तरम्॥१२८॥

If one analytically ponders in detail, one can see that the six systems of philosophy are included in the six Padas. There is no doubt about it whatsoever.

129

आत्मभ्रांतिसम रोग नहीं, सदगुरु वैद्य सुजाण।
गुरुआज्ञासम पथ्य नहीं, औषध विचार ध्यान॥१२९॥
आत्मभ्रांतिसमो रोगो नास्ति भिषग् गुरुपमः।
गुरोराज्ञासमं पथ्यं ध्यानतुल्यं न चौषधम्॥१२९॥

There is no disease like the delusion of soul. There is no doctor like the true teacher. There is no prescription like the dictates of true teacher. There is no medicine like (soul) contemplation.

130

जो इच्छो परमार्थ तो, करो सत्य पुरुषार्थ।
भवस्थिति आदि नाम लई, छेदो नहीं आत्मार्थ॥१३०॥
प्रेप्सवः परमार्थ ये ते कुर्वन्वात्मपौरुषम्।
भवस्थित्यादिहेतोस्तु न च्छिन्दन्तु निजं बलम्॥१३०॥

If one desires the highest ideal (of liberation), one must put in the effort. Don't waste soul energies in dealing with worldly circumstances.

131

निश्चयवाणी सांभली, साधन तजवां नोय।
निश्चय राखी लक्षमां, साधन करवां सोय॥१३१॥
आकर्ण्य निश्चितां वाणीं त्याज्यं नैव सुसाधनम्।
रक्षित्वा निश्चये लक्ष्यमाचर्यः साधनाचयः॥१३१॥

After hearing the definite word (about means of soul liberation), do not give up on the means. Safeguarding liberation goal, pursue it with all available means.

132

नय निश्चय एकांतथी, आमां नथी कहेल।
एकांते व्यवहार नहीं, बने साथ रहेल॥१३२॥
निश्चयो व्यवहारो वा नात्रेकान्तेन दर्शितः।
यत्र स्थाने यथायोग्यं तथा तद् युगलं भवेत्॥१३२॥

Conceptual (knowledge-based) and practical paths (to soul realization) are not shown here as inherently one. They are combined, as appropriate according to the circumstances.

133

गच्छ मतनी जे कल्पना, ते नहीं सद्व्यवहार।
भान नहीं निजरूपनुं, ते निश्चय नहीं सार॥१३३॥
सद्व्यवहारहीनाऽस्ति कल्पना मत-गच्छयोः।
निजभानाद् ऋते तात! निश्चयो न हि सुन्दरः॥१३३॥

Without giving up imagined distinctions about creeds, there is no Right Conduct. Just as, O son, without self-realization there is no Right Belief.

134

आगल ज्ञानी थई गया, वर्तमानमां होय।
थाशे काल भविष्यमां, मार्गभेद नहीं कोय॥१३४॥
अभूवन् ज्ञानिनः पूर्वे वर्तन्ते ये च नाऽऽगताः।
विदां तेषां समेषां वै मार्गभेदो न विद्यते॥१३४॥

There have been self-knowing people in the past and present and will be in the future. It has been known to all of them that there is no difference in the path (of liberation).

135

सर्व जीव छे सिद्धसम, जे समजे ते थाय।
सद्गुरुआज्ञा जिनदशा, निमित्त कारण मांय॥१३५॥

सिद्धतुल्यान् समान् जीवान् यो जानाति भवेत् स सः ।
अर्हत्स्थितिर्गुरोराज्ञा निमित्तं तत्र विद्यते ॥१३५॥

All *jivas* (living beings) are inherently liberated. One who knows this also becomes liberated. The following of true teacher's precepts is an auxiliary cause for liberation.

136

उपादानुं नाम लई, ए जे तजे निमित्त ।
पामे नहीं सिद्धत्वनं, रहे भ्रान्तिमां स्थित ॥१३६॥
उपादानच्छलेनैव निमित्तानि त्यजन्ति ये ।
लभन्ते सिद्धभावं नो भ्रान्ताः स्युस्ते उत ध्रुवम् ॥१३६॥

One who putting forth the real principal cause deceitfully gives up the auxiliary cause (as in verse 135), does not find liberation and remain fixed in fallacy forever.

137

मुख्यी ज्ञान कथे अने, अंतर छूटयो न मोह ।
ते पामर प्राणी करे, मात्र ज्ञानीनो द्रोह ॥१३७॥
वक्ति ज्ञानकथां वक्त्राच्चित्तं मोहतमावृतम् ।
यस्य रङ्गस्य मर्त्यस्य ज्ञानिद्रोही स केवलम् ॥१३७॥

Those poor people (low in Knowledge) who preach knowledge verbally but are inside covered with delusion, show hostility to those with knowledge.

138

दया, शांति, समता, क्षमा, सत्य, त्याग, वैराग्य ।
होय मुमुक्षु घट विषे, एह सदाय सुजाग्य ॥१३८॥
दया शान्तिः क्षमा साम्यं वैराग्यं त्याग-सत्यते ।
मुमुक्षुहृदये नित्यमेते स्युः प्रकटा गुणाः ॥१३८॥

Compassion, peace, forgiveness, equanimity, renunciation, non-attachment, and truth, these qualities are always present in the heart of a soul-seeker in manifest form.

139

मोहभाव क्षय होय ज्यां, अथवा होय प्रशांत।
 ते कहिये ज्ञानीदशा, बाकी कहिये भ्रांत॥१३९॥
 यत्राऽस्ति मोहनं क्षीणं वा प्रशान्तं भवेत् तत्कत्।
 वाच्या ज्ञानिदशा साऽन्या भ्रान्तता स्पष्टमुच्यते॥१३९॥

Where delusion has been destroyed or is subsided, that is spoken as the condition of one with knowledge. All else is clearly spoken as illusion.

140

सकल जगत् ते एठवत्, अथवा स्वप्नसमान।
 ते कहिये ज्ञानीदशा, बाकी वाचाज्ञान॥१४०॥
 उच्छिष्टान्नायमानं वा स्वप्नवद् वेत्ति यो जगत्।
 एषा ज्ञानिस्थितिर्वाच्या शेषं वाग्जालमामतम्॥१४०॥

Understanding world like undesirable food or dream is spoken as the condition of one with knowledge. All else is merely lip service to knowledge.

141

स्थानक पांच विचारीने, छठे वर्ते जेह।
 पामे स्थानक पांचमुं, एमां नहीं संदेह॥१४१॥
 स्थानपञ्चकमालोच्य षष्ठके यः प्रवर्तते।
 प्राभुयात् पञ्चमं स्थानं नाऽत्र शङ्काकणोऽपि रे!॥१४१॥

(Of the indicated six Padas,) one who after analytical study of the first five follows the sixth one (way for liberation) attains the fifth one (liberation). There is no doubt about this whatsoever.

Final Salutation

142

देह छतां जेनी दशा, वर्ते देहातीत।
 ते ज्ञानीनां चरणमां, हो वंदन अगणित॥१४२॥
 देहातीत दशा यस्य देहे सत्यपि वर्तते।
 तज्ज्ञानिचरणे मेऽस्तु वन्दनाऽगणिता त्रिधा॥१४२॥

One who truly is beyond body while living in the body, I offer my innumerable, three-fold (with speech, body, and mind) salutations to him.

Overview and Comments

About The Work

The poetic talents of Rajchandra were immense and he wrote from his inner experience. One can easily see the preciseness of detail in his writings and lucidity in his expression and composition. In one year's time, Rajchandra rendered the whole of *Ramayana* and *Mahabhart*a in Gujarati verse form and wrote/composed many other religious writings during his lifetime. These works inspired the soul-seekers and served as guiding light for them. *Atma-Siddhi* is one example of such inspirational works.⁵

Lord Krishna was concerned about the state of *dharma* in the world about five thousand years ago and felt compelled to reveal to Arjuna and others the right path for suitable living and soul-liberation when he spoke *Bhagavad-Gita*.⁶ Rajchandra, likewise, was pained to see that wrong beliefs, wrong knowledge, and wrong conduct⁷ were spreading in society during his lifetime and became common in contradiction with Jain principles. On the one hand he saw dry philosophers and theologians, who knew what was right for soul-liberation but did not practice the prescribed virtues and did not follow Jain path. On the other hand he was concerned about the mere ritualists, who were interested in religious rites and took chaff for the grains. Both of these groups suffered from deep delusions and led others also on to the path to untruth. It is for the benefit of such dry philosopher, theologians, and ritualists that the work *Atma-Siddhi* was offered.⁸

The central theme in the work is that there is a soul or self, which in contaminated state needs to be liberated by following Jain path of soul-liberation. Consciousness is the essence of soul, with perception, apprehension, intelligence,

and knowledge as its manifestations. In pure state, soul is both *janana* (perfect knowledge) and *darshana* (perfect intuition) and is eternally situated in own enlightenment and bliss. In the contaminated state, however, soul is under the influence of multitudes of illusions, passions, and desires caused by wrong beliefs, wrong knowledge, and wrong conduct that bind soul with *karmic matter*. Soul inherently is free to do or not do *karmas*, but covered with *karmic matter* and under the influence of illusions, passions, and desires is prompted to do *karmas* and enjoys or suffers the fruits of the *karmas*. Thus the doing of *karmas* is optional for soul, but experiencing the fruits of *karmas* is compulsory. Only liberated souls or *Siddhas* are free from the fruits of *karmas*, as in their case the undertaken *karmas* lose delusional potency and become non-binding. Through the *karmas* soul literally gets wrapped with *karmic matter* and transmigrates from one birth to another until finally liberated. Liberation occurs when soul is able to shed all *karmic matter* by following Jain principles, virtues, and austerities and regains its original pure state. Soul-liberation is self-realization. Core Jain principles are right perception, right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct and five basic Jain virtues are *ahimsa*, truth, non-stealing, chastity, and non-attachment. *Ahimsa* is to be practiced at the thought, word, and deed levels and this concept also includes the concept of *karuna* or all-inclusive mercifulness toward all and the concept of *kshama* or unconditional forgiveness. Austerities are fasting, showing reverence to superiors, rigid control of senses, speech, and intellect, confession of faults, and goodwill towards all. Ideal is of enlightened self-interest, freedom from emotions and passions, freedom from dependencies on others, being neither pleased nor annoyed with life circumstances, being without desires, being without worldly possessions, and voluntary rejection of pleasures. Self-discipline, self-pursuit, self-absorption, and self-enlightenment are part of these principles, the following of which is to be incremental and continuous until perfection is achieved.⁹ The road to liberation is lonely and only outside help

available is of the examples of *tirthankars*¹⁰ and liberated souls¹¹ and the blessings and guidance of a true teacher.¹²

Most central theme is of six Padas (spiritual steps), as also mentioned and commented upon in the previous chapter.¹³ These Padas are: 1) soul exists, 2) soul is ever-present, 3) soul is doer, 4) soul is enjoyer, 5) liberation is there, and 6) there is a way for liberation. In this work, the Padas are presented in the form of questions asked by the disciple and answers provided by the true teacher. Obstacles to soul-liberation, necessity of a true teacher, characteristics of non-seekers of soul and soul-seekers, liberation path, and relationships among right belief, right knowledge, and liberation are the other presented themes. Crucial point is that soul or self does exist, which in embodied or conditioned state is the doer of *karmas* and enjoys/suffers the fruits of *karmas* until liberated. Soul-liberation is possible and there is a way for liberation. The way is delineated in Jain path and principles.

The Text Salutation to True Teacher (Verse 1)

It is a time-honored tradition in India to offer obeisance to gods, goddesses, gurus, and even holy rivers, mountains, and forests before starting a religious or pious work. The author here follows this age-old tradition and offers obeisance to the true teacher, who according to the Indian tradition is like a god or goddess. Not only humans are teachers in the social, educational, and religious realms, but even non-humans like rivers, plants, and other embodiments of nature can serve as teachers if one learns a lesson from them to elevate life.¹⁴ In this verse, the author says that I bow to the feet of my noble teacher who provided me soul knowledge and without such knowledge I suffered infinite misery.

Obstacles to Soul Liberation (Verses 2-8)

In these verses the author states that during present time the path to liberation has practically disappeared. Some people are engrossed in barren knowledge and others in lifeless rituals and they regard these to be the paths to liberation. These are the people with confused discretion and attracted only to external activities. Some people even say that both bondage and liberation of soul are illusions. These are the people whose knowledge and conduct are full of delusions. Renunciation etc. is fruitful only in association with soul knowledge and those who do not have renunciation at heart cannot be with soul knowledge. Preoccupation with external activities makes one lose sight of the ideal of self-realization. The signs of a soul-seeker are that whatever and wherever he sees something worth adopting, he tries to know and puts that into practice.

Four main points have been made in the above paragraph: 1) a concern has been expressed about the disappearance of liberation path, 2) a concern is there about the people who take externalities to be the path to liberation, 3) the place of renunciation in soul-liberation has been pointed out, and 4) the signs of a soul-seeker have been mentioned. Different incarnations of God, prophets, and saints of earlier times and belonging to different traditions have expressed similar concerns and made similar points. Lord Krishna begins the rendering of *Bhagavad-Gita* with these two main concerns: that the path to soul-liberation during his time had practically disappeared and that the people with demonic nature had started predominating the affairs in the world. Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, and Mohamed had expressed similar concerns and they tried to counteract the faith of people in externalities as path to liberation. Renunciation also has been mentioned as a key requirement to soul-liberation in all religious traditions. Different religious traditions also point out how to separate soul-seekers from non-seeker of soul in terms of their qualities and characteristics and *Bhagavad-Gita* is full

of information on this point as well as other points mentioned here.¹⁵

An explicit purpose of this work is to shed light in the four subject areas mentioned in the earlier paragraph and help people attain self-realization through a slow and steady progress on liberation path. All religions have prescribed a liberation path comprising of some kind of metaphysics, theology, philosophy, and practices like ethics, rituals, worship, offerings, devotion, charity, etc. Absorbed in own viewpoints and without paying heed to each other, conceptual philosophers and ritualists proclaim that their way is the path to liberation and these verses suggest that both of these groups have misguided notions and suffer from delusions. Liberation is possible only if the two approaches of knowledge and practice are combined; otherwise one forever stays under the influence of delusions and in bonded state. Love, compassion, sympathy, humility, forgiveness, etc. are also helpful and are to be cultivated for soul-liberation. Some people suggest that soul is forever pure and situated in own knowledge and that the bonded state of soul is merely an illusion. This may be true, but consequences of the illusion are real, just as painful happenings in dream state may be an illusion but the experience on the part of the dreamer is real. The same is the case regarding soul delusions and one must awaken (self-realize) to get rid of the bonded state of soul. Cultivation of external renunciation is not sufficient. Not only external renunciation serve no purpose, it even makes one forget the real ideal of self-realization. True inner renunciation and forsaking of worldly pleasures are essential for soul-liberation.

Necessity of A True Teacher (Verses 9-22)

These verses point to the necessity of quitting own obstinacy and serving the noble teacher in order to realize supreme truth and gain self-knowledge. A noble teacher is indicated as one who has soul knowledge, is equipoised, has mastery of the

scriptures, is pure, and is adept at speech. There is no one like a living true teacher, without the teachings of whom soul knowledge is not born. Where association of a living true teacher is difficult, scriptures that engage in analytical study of soul serve the purpose of soul-liberation. Or else if the true teacher so advises, one should intently and impartially study scriptures without paying attention to particular school of thought they belong to. Soul attains liberation through control of delusion-born self-freedoms and these can be controlled quickly in association with a living true teacher. By following other means, the delusions are doubled. Right belief is entailed in forsaking delusion-born self-freedoms/obstinate views and living in accordance with the goal established by the true teacher. The mighty foes of pride, etc. do not get demolished through delusion-born self-freedoms, but are destroyed only with a slight effort by taking shelter of a true teacher. Those who follow the teachings of a true teacher have to show reference to him to attain perfect knowledge, even though the teacher himself may not yet have achieved perfection. Reverence to the true teacher is one of the root-causes of liberation, but few people know it. Association with an untrue teacher is damaging. Whatever one learns from an untrue teacher causes more delusion and sinks one in dangerous mundane existence. Upon reflection a liberation-seeking soul recognizes this fact. A soul absorbed in own whims takes this fact otherwise.

It is a common experience that one needs a guide, counselor, teacher, or guru in different realms to muddle through life. As a child, mother and father are needed to help one develop personal identity, gain good habits and behaviors, and learn the art of living. Teachers, role models, and professional guides are needed later for educational, livelihood, and progress purposes. Learning from others is a life-long process for all of us. Of all the guides, counselors, teachers, and gurus, greatest importance is accorded to the spiritual master referred to in this work as the noble true teacher. The true teacher helps one live properly, navigate the

path to liberation, and attain ultimate goal of *moksha*, *nirvana*, or *kevalya*. Different religious traditions recommend the search and adoption of a true teacher in own ways and also indicate how to serve and revere him to obtain the means of soul-liberation. The verses in this section recommend the forsaking of self-freedoms, obstinacy, and pride, etc. and adoption of devotion, humility, and reverence to the noble teacher for realizing the supreme goals of self-knowledge and soul-liberation. Without the teachings of the true teacher, these goals are not possible. The true teacher is indicated more important than the scriptures and helps control delusion-born self-freedoms, obstinacy, and pride more easily and helps attain the goal of soul-liberation. One must always revere true teacher and beware of untrue teacher. Untrue teacher doubles delusions, ignorance, deceit, vanity, pride, passions, etc. and makes one go through repeated births and deaths. A soul-seeker is aware of this fact, while a person absorbed in own whims is not. Who is a noble teacher is also indicated in these verses.

Non-Seeker of Soul (Verses 23-32)

A person with own whims cannot be a soul-seeker. Such a person takes one without knowledge and absorbed in external renunciation as true teacher or one from own caste, describes Jina in terms of external features and qualities, and confounds the truth. Even in association with a true teacher, such a person maintains perverse views and follows untrue teacher with determination chiefly to gratify own vanity. He takes scriptural knowledge to be a hindrance in godly progress and own beliefs as the reason for liberation. He does not attain orientations and characteristics of godly path, but remains falsely prideful of such orientations, desires reverence from other people, and does not attain liberation. He adopts true knowledge to the point of lip service, but does not adopt noble behaviors and remains bereft of the means of liberation. He is neither situated in knowledge and nor is equipped with the means for it. He

does everything for own vanity, never deserves true knowledge, and does not obtain it. His desires remain unvanquished, inner renunciation is not achieved, simplicity of nature is not attained, and evenness of mind does not occur. A non-seeker of soul is very unfortunate. Those who keep company of such a person also flounder in the ocean of mundane existence.

Bhagavad-Gita also describes non-seekers and seekers of soul as people with demoniac and divine natures. As a comparison to the views expressed above, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna¹⁶ that people with demoniac nature suffer from pride, arrogance, conceit, anger, harshness, and ignorance. They do not know what are proper and improper behaviors and what are cleanliness and truth. They suffer from egotism, pride, false-prestige, illusions, lust, thousands of desires, and are sense-focused. They are complacent and impudent, disregard scriptural injunctions, and act according to own whims. They claim that world is unreal, there is no God, and all activities take place on their own. All their activities are destructive and such people do not attain happiness, perfection, or supreme destination. By contrast, qualities of people with divine nature are: fearlessness, purification of one's existence, cultivation of spiritual knowledge, charity, self-control, performance of sacrifice, study of the Vedas, simplicity, nonviolence, truthfulness, freedom from anger, renunciation, tranquility, aversion to fault-finding, compassion for all living entities, freedom from covetousness, gentleness, modesty, steady determination, vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, and freedom from envy and passion for honor. Divine qualities lead to liberation and demoniac qualities to further bondage and suffering. Similar ideas have been expressed in these verses.

Soul-Seeker (Verses 33-35)

Soul-seeker considers finding association of a living true teacher as great gain and follows his advice in unison with the

faculties of mind, body, and speech. He knows that wherever is soul knowledge, there is the true saint and teacher. He is also aware that it is delusional to follow one from own caste who is not a soul-seeker.

Soul-seeker is opposite of non-seeker of soul, who has been described in detail in the earlier verses. Soul-seeker, accordingly, has been described here in lesser detail. The importance of finding and obeying a true teacher has been reemphasized. Qualities of a soul-seeker, as mentioned in *Bhagavad-Gita*, have been stated in the earlier section for comparison purposes.

\ Liberation Path (Verses 36-41)

These verses state that liberation path stays the same during the past, present, and future and acquirement of noble behaviors inspires this path. Thinking thus within inner mind, one should find association of the true teacher and sole goal should be self-realization and not satisfaction of other mental cravings. The abode of self-realization lies in the vanquishing of desires for the sole purpose of liberation, repentance for present mundane existence, and true compassion for all. Where these requirements exist, favorable soul conditions exist. Liberation is not found where inner cravings do not go away. Where favorable soul conditions exist, one pays rapt attention to the teachings of true teacher and thereby noble thoughts and pain-destroying bliss develop. Where noble thoughts exist, self-enlightenment occurs that vanquishes delusions and liberation is attained.

The verses here provide seven-point advice for getting started on the path to liberation and attainment of soul-liberation. First, one has to realize that living in the world full of pain and misery is a bad proposition and one has to get out of this bad deal. Second, one should repent for present mundane existence. Third, one should develop a desire for self-realization. Fourth, one has to develop aversion for worldly pleasures and give up all mental desires and cravings

(even the desire of liberation disappears during the last stages of self-realization¹⁷). Fifth, one has to find association of a true teacher and obey his advice with the concerted faculties of mind, body, and speech. Sixth, one develops noble behaviors that are facilitated by the association of true teacher. Seventh, one develops true compassion for all. The emphasized order of these soul-liberating requirements may change, but these are responsible for the generation of a favorable soul environment that reinforces noble thoughts, generates pain-destroying bliss, creates self-enlightenment, vanquishes delusions, and helps one attain liberation.

Liberation path remains the same in different religious traditions and these traditions also stress central importance of finding a true teacher for soul-liberation purposes. In *Bhagavad-Gita*, for example, the necessity of having a true teacher has been indicated in Chapter 4 and this chapter also describes transcendental knowledge, path to self-realization, requirements for following the liberation path, characteristics of a self-realized person, and qualifications of a true teacher. Other chapters of *Bhagavad-Gita* elaborate on the themes of soul entanglement in the material world, what to give up and what to gain for self-realization, how to live above the three modes of nature, what is perfect renunciation, and how finally to attain soul-liberation.¹⁸

Six Padas (Spiritual Steps) (Verses 42-44)

In the form of a dialogue between the disciple and true teacher, these verses point to the six spiritual steps that give rise to noble thoughts and show the liberation path. It is indicated that soul is a being, is eternal, is the doer of *karmas*, is the enjoyer/sufferer of *karmas*, is the revealer of right faith, and is the explorer of own means of liberation. Briefly these six aspects of soul conception have been compared to be the six philosophies.¹⁹ Learned personages have described this highest ideal of six Padas for the knowledge of others.

The verses here refer to the significance of six Padas

(spiritual steps), as those lead to noble thoughts, true knowledge, and show liberation path. Conception of soul as revealer of own right faith and explorer of own liberation path has also been indicated.²⁰ Lord Krishna reveals to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-Gita* that soul is its own enemy or friend depending on whether it tries or does not try to find own liberation path.²¹ Citing ancient literature by Shri Kunda Kundacharya (e.g., *Panchastikaya Gatha*), Shri Nemi Chandra Siddhanta Chakravarti (e.g., *Dravya Sangraha*), and more recent writings of Rajchandra (e.g., *Atma-Siddhi*), J. L. Jaini claims that the entire fundamental position of Jainism is summarized in these verses.²²

Does Soul Exist? (Verses 45-59)

The pupil expresses doubt in these verses that which cannot be seen, has no form, is not distinguishable, and cannot be experienced is only spoken of as soul but does not exist. Or else if soul exists, it is the same as the body, the life force, and the senses. There is no sign that soul is different from them. If soul is different from the body, then why a person cannot so experience it? If it is as it is described, then why can't we know it like we do pots, clothes, etc.? Therefore, there is no soul and the tradition of finding liberation of soul is futile. O true teacher, please try to effectively remove this inner doubt of mine.

The true teacher says that because of their close association body and soul look as if the same but are not so. The two are separate, for their characteristics are distinct, just as the sword is sure separate from its sheath. The distinguishing characteristics of soul are that it sees all with own sight, knows all by itself, takes all kinds of forms, and experiences all without any problem. Each bodily sense has knowledge of own faculty, but soul has the knowledge of all the sense faculties. This fact is neither known to the body, nor to the life force, and nor to the senses. It is the soul, which supplies power to the body and enables the senses to engage in own

faculties. Soul appears different in its different abodes and is always visibly conscious. This consciousness is soul and that is its main distinguishing characteristic. One knows all kinds of pots, etc. and therefore accepts their existence. But one does not believe in the knower of that reality. High intelligence is seen in a tiny body and small intelligence is seen in a large body. If body itself is soul, then this should not happen. Additionally characteristics of *jivas* (living beings) and *ajivas* (non-living beings) are different and never the same. In all the three times (past, present, and future), *jivas* and *ajivas* remain distinguishably separate. Due to own ignorance, soul doubts itself. The one which expresses doubt is soul and on whom doubt is expressed is soul. It is definitely a surprise that soul is self-doubter. Through inner reflections, soul's existence can be understood.

Arjuna had expressed a similar doubt about soul to Lord Krishna. As the opposing armies stood poised for battle at Kurukshetra, Arjuna saw his family members, relatives, teachers, and friends in both the armies ready to fight and sacrifice their lives. Overcome by compassion and grief, he is bewildered and says to Lord Krishna that he won't fight the battle for any gains. Lord Krishna tries to pacify him and explains fundamental characteristics of soul and how it is different from material body.²³ The true teacher tries to do the same here by pointing out to the disciple that soul does exist and it is not the same as body, life force, or senses. Though through close association body and soul look as if the same, but they are distinct for their characteristics are separate. Main distinguishing characteristics of soul are its consciousness, knowledge, enlightenment, and bliss, which are not derived through combination of external objects and do not depend on them. Soul is self-empowered and self-enlightened. Only soul knows itself and illuminates self and other objects. It is subject and object of cognition and knowledge. Eye sees, mind knows, and body feels, but their functioning power is supplied by soul. Bodily faculties also depend on outside objects and availability of intelligence.

attention, movement, etc. Soul sees all by own sight, knows all by itself, takes all kinds of forms, experiences all, and is visibly conscious. Intelligence, perception, discrimination, growth, and change are taken as further proofs of the existence of soul. Soul cannot be seen directly, but is inferred through its qualities, vitalities,²⁴ and propensities. It is also known by comparison of *jivas* (living beings) and *ajivas* (non-living beings).²⁵ Wherever there is life, soul is also there. When life ends, soul also makes an exit. Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions describe the qualities, characteristics, and propensities of soul in its bonded and liberated states at length.²⁶

Is Soul Ever-Present? (Verses 60-70)

In these verses the disciple expresses further doubt that even if soul exists it is not clear whether it is mortal or immortal, because it is born in union with the body and destructs with the body's destruction. Or, it is a momentary substance that changes every moment and through this experience also soul does not appear to be eternal.

The true teacher poses some counter-questions in order for the disciple to engage in reflection on the asked questions. He asks him to pay attention to the fact that body is born in union with non-living matter (which is without consciousness and cannot experience), then who experiences the birth and death of soul and through whose experience the knowledge of birth and death arises (i.e., soul and body have to be separate in order for this knowledge to arise)? The true teacher stresses that soul is the one that has the experience and knowledge of birth and death of itself. Moreover soul is not born of any combination of matter. Nobody has seen whether soul is born of non-living matter or non-living matter is born of soul. One whose birth is not possible through any union and whose death is not possible is eternal. Tendencies (such as, anger) in humans and animals are derived from past births and this phenomenon also indicates that existence of soul is

continuous. Throughout occurring changes in childhood, youth, etc. one feels as the same person and activities (such as, speech) also require continuity of the same person to take place. Never anything is so destroyed that there remains no sign of it and the true teacher asks the disciple to consider if consciousness gets destroyed, then what it has transformed into?

Consciousness in the beings is taken as main proof of the existence of soul. This consciousness cannot be created through any combinations of matter and whatever cannot be created through combinations cannot die or destruct. Whether the beings are Siddhas (liberated souls) or Samsaris (bonded souls), soul is the same in everyone. The same soul also resides in animals, plants, and other beings up to one-sensed life. Soul is ever-present and eternal. For Siddhas, soul is situated in own pure consciousness, knowledge, and bliss and therefore is not bound by the fruits of actions. For Samsaris, soul is deluded by passions, desires, and other propensities, gets covered with *karmic matter*, enjoys and suffers the fruits of *karmas*, and transmigrates from one birth to another until liberated. Consciousness in the beings helps them know self as well as others and is the proof of soul's existence. Body does not know soul; it is soul that knows body and all else. Soul is also the known when it reflects upon self and this phenomenon is called self-realization. Soul takes different experiences into next birth and these partially influence present passions, desires, attitudes, orientations, and other propensities in life.²⁷

Is Soul Doer? (Verses 71-78)

The disciple in these verses expresses doubt about soul as the doer of *karmas* and presents four possibilities as to why *karmas* take place. The suggested possibilities are: 1) *karmas* just happen by themselves, without anyone prompting or doing them, 2) soul has natural tendency to do *karmas* and does them, 3) soul is free of *karmas*, but non-living matter

binds it to do *karmas*, and 4) soul is bound to do *karmas* by God's inspiration, but is inherently free. Thus it appears that doing *karmas*, one way or the other, is ordained upon soul and their ceasing never occurs.

The true teacher asks the disciple that if soul is not the inspirer of *karmas*, then who inspires them, for non-living matter (being non-living) cannot be the inspirer of *karmas*. If soul's activity does not exist, then there would be no accumulation of *karmas* on soul's part (and no enjoying/suffering of the consequences of *karmas*). *Karmas* do not occur through own natural tendency and nor because soul is duty-bound to do *karmas*. In the bonded state, soul is not completely independent of matter, but becomes independent when it gains knowledge of self. God is not the doer or creator of anything, but is situated in own pure nature. If God would inspire *karmas*, then He would also be associated with the defects in *karmas* (and would be no longer God). Lastly when soul acts according to own original nature, then there is positive impact on the *karmas*. When soul acts counter to own nature, then there is adverse impact on the *karmas*.

A summary view of the above statements is that *karmas* just don't happen by themselves, nor God is the inspirer of *karmas*,²⁸ nor doing *karmas* is soul's natural tendency, and nor soul is duty-bound to do *karmas*. In pure form, soul is situated in own consciousness, knowledge, and bliss and is free from doing *karmas*. Siddhas (liberated souls) may seem like doing *karmas*, but all their actions are without consequences and non-binding. In the bonded state, soul is under the influence of passions, desires, avarice, etc., seeks and does *karmas* with the aid of intelligence, mind, body, senses, and faculties as instruments, takes responsibility for the *karmas*, enjoys/suffers good or bad consequences of the *karmas*,²⁹ and gets wrapped with *karmic matter*. Matter alone is not the doer of *karmas*, but provides an auxiliary cause and serves as instrument for doing *karmas*.

Is Soul Enjoyer? (Verses 79-86)

The disciple expresses doubt in these verses regarding soul as enjoyer and who decides the fruits of *karmas*. He says that soul may be the doer of *karmas*, but it cannot be the enjoyer. Also, how lifeless matter can know what fruits of a particular *karma* will be for the doer. God does not inspire *karmas* (as indicated in the previous section) and therefore He cannot be the fruit-giver. If He does so, he would not be God. Moreover God's existence and world's condition are both questionable, then why bother about the fruits of good and bad actions.

The true teacher tries to explain that through own vibrancy and in association with *karmic matter*, whatever soul feels and imagines it begets that kind of body (and engages in good and bad *karmas*). Just as poison or nectar do not know their effects, but the eater begets them. Soul, similarly, begets the fruits of good and bad actions. Never anything happens without a reason, but is the result of good or bad *karmas*. That is why one is seen as poor and another one as rich. It is not necessary to think of God as the doer of *karmas* or giver of their fruits, *karmas* fructify through own nature and are exhausted after their fruits are borne. The true teacher indicates that here the enjoying/suffering of the fruits of *karmas* through their inherent nature has been described. This subject matter is very deep and has been spoken of briefly.³⁰

It can be easily understood that credit or discredit of an undertaken act goes to the responsible agent. If soul does *karmas*, then soul has to enjoy or suffer their consequences. Fruits of the *karmas* have to be enjoyed or suffered by all bonded souls, with body, mind, and senses as instruments. But the fruits, at times, do not manifest themselves instantly or even in the same birth. That is why some pious people are seen miserable in present life and some rogues are seen comfortable and prospering. These results are temporary and hammer ultimately does fall on the culprit. Liberation simply means that the fruits of *karmas* cease to have an impact on soul.

J. L. Jaini further tries to explain³¹ that according to Jain philosophy subjective *karmas* are the activity of soul and these *karmas* take the form of conscious vibrations that fill, animate, and enliven the body, speech, and mind. The vibrations then attain reflected power of the soul and dust molecules of lifeless *karmic matter* result that bind with the soul. There are two stages in soul's union with *karmic matter*, *asarva* or inflow of *karmas* and *bandha* or actual bondage. Each of these is either subjective (*bhava*) or objective (*dravya*). Subjective or *bhava* is conscious attentiveness (*chetana upayoga*) of soul, which leads to *yoga* or vibratory activity of the body, speech, or mind. Objective or *dravya* is *karmic matter* itself, which inflows and binds with the soul. Soul's consciousness is attentive and serves as the *sine qua non* of the process. This being present, a passion or propensity (such as, anger) excites any or all of the body, speech, and mind. This excitement assumes the form of vibratory activity of very fine material molecules of the body, speech, or mind and is subjective inflow of *karmas* or *bhava asarva*. Also, like attracts the like universally and vibrating molecules of body, speech, or mind set up similar vibration with corresponding *karmic matter* present universally. The newly awakened *karmic matter* is set in motion toward the soul and is called objective inflow of *karmas* or *dravya asarva*. Original vibrations of the body, speech, or mind may stop and in this case there is no further bondage of the soul. This state is known as transitory bondage of soul or *iryapatha*. But in most cases the vibratory process continues and there is lasting or subjective bondage of the soul called *bhava bandha*. Type and level of the bondage are determined by the kind of passions and their intensity. Actual particle of *karmic matter* unite with the soul and cover it, as sheath covers the sword. This state is called objective bondage or *dravya bandha*. Liberation of soul occurs when soul is able to shed all *karmic matter* by following Jain principles and practices.

Is There Liberation? (Verses 87-91)

The disciple starts expressing further doubt in these verses. He admits that soul is the doer and enjoyer of *karmas*, but does not see the liberation of soul possible as infinite time has passed and soul is still associated with defects. Also he says, when soul does good *karmas* it attains godly status. When it does bad *karmas*, it attains hellish condition. Soul is never without *karmas*.

The true teacher tries to explain that just as good and bad *karmas* bring forth fruits, non-action (cessation of good and bad *karmas*) similarly brings forth the fruit of liberation of soul. It is true that since infinite time soul is engaged in good and bad *karmas* through own nature (due to the bonding of *karmic matter*), but with the snapping of the tendency of good and bad *karmas* soul also attains liberation through own nature (after the shedding of *karmic matter*). Total dissociation with bodily associations, accordingly, has been described as liberation and in this state soul attains infinite bliss.

Main concern here is whether liberation of soul is possible or soul forever stays in bonded state. It has been indicated before³² that soul in a sense is always liberated as it is different from matter and is full of consciousness, knowledge, enlightenment, and bliss. In the conditioned state, soul becomes deluded, forgets own divine nature, and gets wrapped with *karmic matter*. Liberation from the delusional state is possible by controlling illusions, desires and passions, seeking dissociation with bodily associations, and rising above worldly attractions, comforts, and pleasures. The way to do this has been suggested by all religious traditions and is also explained in the next section.

Is There A Way for Liberation? (Verses 92-107)

The disciple continues with his doubt and says that even if there is a state of liberation, there appears to be no way to

attain it. How dissociation with *karmas* is possible that are with the soul since infinite time. Also, different opinion and philosophies prevail regarding the ways to liberation of soul and one decided way is not there. It is also not known in which caste or garb one attains liberation. With these prevailing confusing conditions, what use will be the gaining knowledge of soul when the way to liberation is not known.

The true teacher tries to elucidate that ignorance generates the tendency to do *karmas* and through inclination for liberation one gets situated in own true nature, where the lighted lamp of knowledge destroys the darkness of ignorance. Whatever are the causes of the binding of the soul are also the ways soul is bound. Breaking through the reasons for the binding is the way to liberation and crossing of the mundane ocean. Attachment, envy, and ignorance are main knots of *karmas* and total freedom from them is the way to liberation. Soul represents truth and is pure consciousness without faulty experiences. The way it can be restored to pure state is the path to liberation. *Karmas* are of infinite kinds, of which main ones are deluding *karmas*. These are of two kinds: deluders of right belief and deluders of right conduct. Deluders of right belief are destroyed through enlightenment and deluders of right conduct through non-attachment. *Karma*-bondage occurs in association with passions (anger, etc.) and forgiveness, etc. nullify it. One who after forsaking faith in different opinions, philosophies, and own whimsical behaviors follows liberation path, his future births become fewer and soon finds liberation. There is no distinction of caste or garb; one who engages in the effort gains liberation. The described six Padas or spiritual steps definitely lead to liberation.

Jain philosophy elaborately delineates *karmas* and explains the ways to make them lose soul-binding potency. Outlines of Jainism by J. L. Jaini,³³ for example, lists 8 main types of *karmas* and their 148 sub-types. This work indicates how deluders of *karmas* can be stopped through regaining right belief and right conduct. Right belief is gained back through enlightenment and this entails ascertaining real nature of the

things through knowledge, observation, experience, thinking, and feeling. Right conduct is gained back through non-attachment, which is a prerequisite for the vows, carefulness, restraint, performance of duties, contemplation, fortitude, and internal and external right living. Forgiveness, humility, straightforwardness, and charity are antidotes of four major passions of anger, pride, deceit, and greed.³⁴

All religious traditions indicate specific steps to be taken for soul-liberation. The used words, rituals, content, and roadmaps may vary, but the essential goal and path remain the same. Upholders of barren knowledge and ritualists miss this point. They also miss the point that the written word in holy texts is only part of the revelation of essential reality and rituals are external garb of this reality. All religious traditions emphasize that inflow of sins occurs through wrong desires, passions, and propensities of mind, body, and speech. Therefore the advice is that one should conquer such desires, passions, and pleasure-seeking tendencies and rise above particular beliefs. The effort for soul-liberation has to be sincere and not hurting other beings, not lying, non-stealing, chastity, not engrossing oneself in worldly affairs, restraint in acts, speech, and thoughts, curbing of passions, forgiveness, humility, straightforwardness, bearing of troubles with fortitude, equanimity, and cheerfulness under all circumstances help in counteracting the inflow of sins. Right belief, right knowledge, and right conduct are essential means of liberation as well as goals. These means and goals are mutually reinforcing and merge in the form of self-absorption. Soul has to march patiently along the liberation path and ultimately does find its true nature. This is self-realization.³⁵

Right Belief, Right Conduct and Liberation (Verses 108-118)

The true teacher continues to explain further in these verses that one whose desires have calmed down, whose exclusive interest is in liberation, who feels sad about the rebirth process, and who has compassion for all is the seeker after soul. If such

a soul seeker gains knowledge from a true teacher, he acquires right belief and his soul is purified. Such a person quits various opinions and philosophies and follows in the footsteps of the true teacher and gains right belief. One who acts according to inner nature, has faith in the liberation goal, keeps orientations under control is said to possess true right belief. With the growth of right faith, false faith gets removed and right conduct and non-attachment are attained. Through a refocus on inner nature, intelligence becomes fixed and results in perfect knowledge. Thus one attains liberation while living in the body. Just as a dream lasting million of years ends with the snapping of sleep, similarly fallacies of an eternity vanish with the true knowledge. When false association with the body stops, then one is neither the doer of *karmas* and nor their enjoyer. In the *dharma* (prescribed religious duty) lies liberation. Then one himself is the liberated soul, infinite knowledge, immutable form, pure, knowledgeable, conscious, enlightened, and abode of bliss. This is the summary conclusion of all those who have been knowledgeable and have attained liberation.

These verses eloquently describe who is a seeker after soul, how such a person attains right belief, how right belief is connected with right conduct, and how right conduct leads to liberation of soul. The verses also describe the characteristics of a knowledgeable or liberated soul.³⁶

Enlightened Disciple (Verses 119-123)

These verses indicate that through the teachings of the true teacher the disciple gains enlightenment and finds self-knowledge within self. His ignorance dissipates. He now realizes his original form, which is pure, conscious, indestructible, immortal, unchanging, separate from the body, and very spotless. He notices that when in deluded state, soul was both the doer and enjoyer of *karmas*. When not in deluded state, soul is neither the doer and nor the enjoyer of *karmas*. The true teacher further clarifies that situated

naturally in own pure orientation and consciousness soul does and enjoys *karmas*, but stays unaffected by their delusional impact. This freedom from delusion comes through self-purification.

Gratefulness of Disciple (Verses 124-127)

After receiving the teachings, the disciple in these verses expresses great pleasure and satisfaction and says to the true teacher that he is the ocean of kindness and has done a great good to him. He feels obliged and says that in return for his teachings he does not have anything to offer, because everything is lesser than soul knowledge that the true teacher has given him. He promises that from hereon he will live under the true teacher's protection and will engage his body, mind and speech in his service as his very humble servant. The disciple further says that by explaining the six Padas (spiritual steps), the true teacher has shown him that soul and body are separate, just as sword and its sheath are separate. The imparting of this knowledge has been immeasurable favor to him.

Summary Conclusions (Verses 128-141)

These verses offer summary conclusions of the work and indicate that if one would analytically ponder in detail one can see beyond doubt that the six systems of philosophy³⁷ are included in the six Padas (spiritual steps) described here.³⁸ One needs to understand that there is no disease like the delusion of soul, no doctor like the true teacher, no prescription like true teacher's dictates, and no medicine like soul contemplation. If one desires liberation, one must put in the effort and not waste soul energies in dealing with worldly circumstances. After hearing about the means of soul-liberation, one should not let up on these means. Safeguarding the liberation goal, one must pursue it with all available means.

The conceptual and practical paths to soul-liberation are not shown as inherently one in this work, but are to be combined according to the circumstances. Without giving up distinctions about creeds, etc., there is no possibility of right conduct, just as without self-realization there is no right belief. Past and present liberated personages have indicated that the path to liberation is the same. All *jivas* (living beings) are inherently liberated. One who knows this, also becomes liberated. Following the precepts of true teacher is an auxiliary but important cause for liberation. One who deceitfully gives up this cause does not find liberation and remains fixed in fallacy forever.

The low in knowledge preach knowledge verbally, but are covered with delusion inside. These people show hostility toward those with knowledge. Compassion, peace, forgiveness, equanimity, renunciation, non-attachment, and truth, these qualities are always visibly present in a soul-seeker. Where delusion has been destroyed or subsided, that is the condition of one with knowledge (or seeker of knowledge). The one with knowledge takes the world as undesirable food or dream. One who after analytical study of the six Padas (spiritual steps) follows the sixth one (way to liberation), attains the fifth one (liberation). There is no doubt about this.

Final Salutation

(Verse 142)

In this verse the disciple pays his final salutation to the true teacher as follows: "One who truly is beyond body while living in the body, I offer my innumerable, three-fold (with speech, body, and mind) salutations to him."

Notes and References

1. Jaini, J. L., *Atma-Siddhi of Shrimad Rajchandra*. Ahmedabad: Shrimad Rajchandra Gyan Pracharak Trust, 1923.
2. The English translation attempts to achieve exact

equivalent of the Sanskrit verses. The author is deeply indebted to his wife, Asha Sharma, for considerable help in the translation.

3. To properly understand the translation and later on the overview of themes and comments, the reader should refer to Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of life and Chapter 6 - Philosophy of Six Padas.
4. It is implied here that the true teacher has already provided answers to the disciple's five questions.
5. Additionally see: Chapter 2 - The Life of Rajchandra.
6. See: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. Los Angeles: The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1986 (Chapter 4, Verse 2).
7. Compare with the "Three Jain Jewels" of Right Belief, Right Knowledge, and Right Conduct. Also see: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
8. Jaini, *Atma-Siddhi of Shrimad Rajchandra*, op. cit., 1923.
9. For more details, see: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
10. *Tirthankars* are those who earlier conquered all attachments and passions and found soul-liberation. These Jinas or *tirthankars* are omniscience and serve as role models for others for the purpose of soul-liberation. Jina literally means victor or conqueror of attachments and passions. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
11. The reference here is to all Siddhas who literally shed of all *karmic matter* and were free of worldly attachments and passions. See: Ibid.
12. A living true teacher is preferred and in his absence scriptures and the path shown by *tirthankars* and other liberated souls can serve the same purpose. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism are in agreement on this point. The true teacher tradition is particularly emphasized in Sikhism, the Bhakti movement, and the Muslim Sufi tradition. See: Radhakrishnan, S. and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in India Philosophy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957; Bhaktivedanta,

- Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, op. cit., 1986; Sen, K. M., *Hinduism: The World's Oldest Faith*. Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1961; Embree, A. T., *The Hindu Tradition: Readings in Oriental Thought*. New York: Random House, 1966; Sharma, Satish, "The Bhakti Movement in India." *Popular Culture Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1999.
13. See: Chapter 6 - Philosophy of Six Padas.
 14. See: Chapter 7, footnote 10 above.
 15. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, op. cit., 1986.
 16. See: Ibid (Chapter 16).
 17. See: Chapter 6, footnote 55.
 18. To an extent all chapters of *Bhagavad-Gita* have information on these topics, but especially see: Chapters 4, 15, 16, 17, and 18. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, op. cit., 1986.
 19. The six orthodox systems of philosophy referred to here are: Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva Mimamsa, and Vedanta. In addition to these six systems are Carvaka, Buddhism, and Jainism, the heterodox systems. See: Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, op. cit., 1957.
 20. Six Padas (spiritual steps) and soul conception have been dealt with in considerable detail in the previous chapter and the reader should make use of that information. See: Chapter 6 - Philosophy of Six Padas.
 21. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, op. cit., 1986.
 22. See: Jaini, *Atma-Siddhi of Shrimad Rajchandra*, op. cit., 1923, pp. 51-53.
 23. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, op. cit., 1986 (Chapters 1 and 2).
 24. The ten vitalities are: touch, taste, smell, sight, hearing, power of body, power of mind, speech, respiration, and continuation of the vitalities.
 25. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life for more details on this subject. Also see: Jaini, J. L., "The Living

- and Non-living Substances." *Jaina Gazette*, Vol. 15, No. 4, 1919.
26. For more details, see: Chapter 6 - Philosophy of Six Padas.
 27. These and other soul topics have been dealt with throughout *Bhagavad-Gita*. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, op. cit., 1986.
 28. It should be noted that *samkhya* philosophy in Hinduism brings in the concept of *maya* along with its three *gunas* as externally responsible for the creation and influencing actions of the beings. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, op. cit., 1986.
 29. Compare with the descriptions of soul's activity in *Bhagavad-Gita*. See: Ibid.
 30. Various aspects of *karmas* and freedom from their consequences are discussed in detail in *Bhagavad-Gita* also.. See: Ibid.
 31. Jaini, *Atma-Siddhi of Shrimad Rajchandra*, op. cit., 1923, pp. 74-76.
 32. See: Chapter 6 - Philosophy of Six Padas.
 33. Jaini, J. L., *Outlines of Jainism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916, pp. 26-36. Also see: *Jaina Gem Dictionary* (1918, Appendix A).
 34. See: Jaini, *Atma-Siddhi of Shrimad Rajchandra*, op. cit., 1923, pp. 85-86.
 35. See: Ibid, pp. 21-23.
 36. These topics have been dealt with in Chapters 3 and 6 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life and Philosophy of Six Padas. These topics have also been dealt with throughout *Bhagavad-Gita*. See: Bhaktivedanta, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, op. cit., 1986.
 37. See: Chapter 7, footnote 19 above.
 38. J. L. Jaini clarifies how the above six orthodox systems of Hinduism (see: Chapter 7, footnote 37 above) are reflected in the six Padas (spiritual steps). See: Jaini, *Atma-Siddhi of Shrimad Rajchandra*, op. cit., 1923, pp. 97-98.

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Appendix 1

Gandhi: A Biographical Sketch

The aim of this appendix is to provide a brief overview of Gandhi's life, experiences, and some of the underpinnings of his thought to help the reader better understand Gandhi as the man and his message. The information in this appendix will show how an ordinary boy raised in a traditional Indian family rose to the heights of a world renown figure through his honesty, self-discipline, hard work, and experiments with Truth, nonviolence, simplicity, and love. Gandhi challenged all unjust institutions and practices to help establish a social order of justice and peace in the world and to see that downtrodden and weak were uplifted everywhere. The reader will find information on Gandhi's childhood in India, his stay and studies in England, his return to India and move to South Africa, the Satyagraha struggles in South Africa and India, and his final days. The appendix also includes reflections on Gandhi as the man, his message to the world, and some of the underpinnings of his thought.

Gandhi's Early Life in India

Gandhi's full name was Mohandas K. Gandhi and he was born on October 2, 1869 in Sudamapuri (also known as Porbandar) in the Gujarat State of India. Gandhi's ancestors were well-to-do Modh-Banias whose traditional occupation according to the caste code was running grocery stores and doing petty business. But for the past three generations Gandhi's ancestors were prime ministers of the Kathiawad States and thus Gandhi's family was better-off and well-respected. His father, though without formal education,

managed the affairs of the Kathiawad States with efficiency and was respected for his loyalty to the ruler of the Kathiawad States, generosity, truthfulness, bravery, impartiality, incorruptibility, and practical wisdom. He led a simple life and had no ambition for wealth or worldly pleasures. Gandhi's mother, also without formal education, was a deeply religious and saintly person. She fasted often and undertook tough religious vows. She took her meals only after the daily prayers were offered and never flinched from her religious duties. She commanded great respects from ladies of the extended family and was considered to be wise and well-informed about the affairs of the Kathiawad States. Gandhi was much influenced by his father and mother. From the father, he learned the lessons of honesty, impartiality, straight-forwardness, incorruptibility, and practicality in public affairs. From the mother, he imbibed the deep religious spirit and life-long urge for soul searchings.

When Gandhi was seven years old, his father left Sudamapuri and settled in Rajkot, Gujarat. Gandhi received his early education there. Gandhi recollects that as a young boy he was very shy, memorized the multiplication tables with difficulty, and had little confidence in his abilities. Whenever a praise, prize, or award was accorded to him, it used to be a source of astonishment for him. However, he was truthful, dutiful, and very respectful to the elders. He never minded their flaws and even when occasionally misguided by them never lessened his respect for them. A teacher had once prompted Gandhi to copy the word "kettle" in an examination. Gandhi did not obey the teacher, but also did not keep any grudge against him. Gandhi was mindful of his behavior all the time and guarded it with great care.

At the age of thirteen, Gandhi was married to Kasturbai when he was still in high school. Kasturbai was also thirteen years old. Gandhi recalls that marriage at that time meant to him receiving good clothes to wear, rich dinners to eat, and a strange girl to play with. He was young and did not understand the meaning or responsibility of a husband. Carnal

desire was not yet there and it developed after he started associating with his wife. Even at that age Gandhi was passionately in love with his wife. He thought of her often and wanted to be with her constantly. He was devoted to his wife and believed that the relationship between husband and wife was life-long and based on mutual faithfulness. He also felt that husband was a guide and a teacher for the wife and responsible for her conduct. He wanted Kasturbai to identify with him and obey all his commands. Kasturbai, though illiterate and of a simple nature, was an independent-minded woman and often refused to obey Gandhi. This led to arguments between the husband and wife and the two did not speak to each other for days. Gandhi continued his efforts to educate Kasturbai to help her rid the ignorance and behavioral lackings. Kasturbai paid little attention to such urgings of Gandhi and continued with her manners. Twenty-five years later when Gandhi took the vow of *brahmacharya* in South Africa, he acknowledges that wife should not be a slave of husband's whims and ought to be treated like a companion, helpmate, and partner in life. She should be free to choose her own path in life and establish own goals.

Like many other boys of his age, Gandhi fell in bad company and did some foolish things. For example, he was conscious of his physical weakness, could not jump or run, and was afraid of ghosts, snakes, and thieves. To overcome these weaknesses, Gandhi tried meat-eating at the suggestion of a friend. At first meat-eating was not a pleasant experience, but he gradually got used to it and had about half-a-dozen feasts. This was being done without the knowledge of his parents and this fact constantly gnawed upon Gandhi's conscience. He quit meat-eating and never went back to it again. Gandhi also once went to a brothel in the company of a friend and recalls that he was saved only by God's grace. He admits that though he did not commit the actual sin, carnal desire was there and therefore moral lapse had occurred. Gandhi also smoked cigarettes a few times and stole money twice. He considered smoking to be a barbarous, dirty, and

harmful habit and quit it soon. Of the stealing, he made a clean confession in writing to his father and the father pardoned him without hesitation and with loving care. Gandhi mentions that this was his first experience of ahimsa, the way his father was able to pardon him unconditionally.

In school, Gandhi remained an average student. He remained aloof, avoided sports, and shirked from physical activities. His companions were textbooks and assigned home work and he did not read beyond the prescribed textbooks. But he did develop the habit of taking long walks and this habit served him well later on. Gandhi passed the high school examination in 1887 and joined Samadas College in Bhavnagar, Gujarat. He soon discovered that he was not prepared for higher education, as he could not follow the lectures of the professors. He felt lost and returned home at the end of the first term. A friend of the family suggested at that time that Gandhi should be sent to England to study law and become a barrister. The whole family agreed, but Gandhi's mother was not willing. She feared that while in England Gandhi would drink alcohol, eat meat, and have illicit relations with girls. Gandhi promised not to do any of the three and the mother also gave her permission. Next, were the caste hurdles. The caste members claimed that no Modh-Bania had ever crossed the seas and that going abroad was against the caste practices. They threatened Gandhi that if he would go to England against their wishes, he would be extradited. Gandhi patiently listened to them, ignored their threats, and sailed for England at the tender age of eighteen.

At the ship, Gandhi recalls that his extreme shyness came in the way of his relating with other passengers and the crew members. He spent his days in the cabin, ate meals there, and would come out on the deck when few people were around. Other passengers and the crew members tried to talk to him, but he had difficulty in understanding them and was shy talking to them. As this was Gandhi's first experience of traveling away from home and that too to such a far-off land, it was truly a test of his nerves, endurance, and patience.

Stay and Studies in England

Upon reaching England, Gandhi lodged in a hotel and was visited by a family friend Dr. P. J. Mehta. Gandhi was in his flannels at that time. Dr. Mehta smiled at Gandhi and tried to give him a friendly advice about proper etiquette in England. He added: "Do not ask questions as we usually do in India upon first acquaintance, do not talk loudly, never address people as "Sir" whilst speaking to them as we do in India - only servants and subordinates address their masters that way," and so forth. This advice made Gandhi nervous and he started worrying about his fit in the British society and learning British manners. Everything around him was new and he was a novice at dealing with unknown people and circumstances.

Gandhi's hotel was expensive and the boiled vegetarian food he got there tasted insipid. He also missed his country, family, and the love of his mother. Gandhi cried often, tears rolling down his cheeks and memories of all sorts clouding his emotions and thinking. Falling asleep under such circumstances was not possible. England Gandhi could not bear and returning home was not an option without completing the law studies. Gandhi made up his mind to withstand the difficulties, finish his studies in about three years, and then go back home immediately.

Gandhi left his hotel and rented a couple of cheaper rooms to reduce the expenditures. He later also lived with an Anglo-Indian family as a paying guest and kept on changing the living quarters according to the pursuant need to keep expenditures low. To better fit in the British society, he started learning British manners by dressing up like an English gentleman, taking dancing lessons, taking lessons for playing piano and guitar, and learning French and elocution. These infatuations lasted only for a short time. The only thing which stayed with Gandhi up to his early days in South Africa was the English dress code.

Gandhi's elder brother had been sending him money to

meet the expenditures of his stay and studies. This was on Gandhi's mind and he felt the need to further reduce the expenditures. He kept on changing his living quarters, so that he would be closer to his places of studies and engagements and started walking rather than using public transportation. These walks often amounted to eight to ten miles a day and later served Gandhi well when he undertook Satyagraha struggles in South Africa and India. Gandhi sought cheaper substitutes for food, started preparing own breakfast and dinner at home, and when necessary ate in inexpensive restaurants. He preplanned all his expenditures and kept account of them in his notebook to the last penny. This habit he continued and it proved useful when he had to manage huge sums of money related to the Satyagraha struggles.

In England, Gandhi also developed the habit of reading newspapers to keep himself abreast of the world affairs. Shyness and inability to speak in public were still his weaknesses and he could not express himself properly even in a small group. Once he tried to read from his notes and did not succeed even at that. It was only later in South Africa that Gandhi was able to partially overcome this weakness and was able to address public gatherings.

Expansion of interest in religion was an important gain for Gandhi during his stay in England. Gandhi was exposed to different religions and religious practices in his boyhood. In England, his religious interest expanded and he became a true seeker of Truth for the rest of his life. This is how it happened. It was Gandhi's second year in England, when two Theosophists brothers who had an interest in reading *Bhagavad Gita* (Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Song Celestial*, to be more specific) came to Gandhi and invited him to read the book with them. Gandhi had not yet read *Bhagavad Gita* and the first reading of the book made a deep impression on him. He considered *Bhagavad Gita* to be an excellent source for gaining knowledge of Truth and made it a constant guide. Later Gandhi also read Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*, Madame Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy*, Mrs. Besant's *How I*

Became a Theosophist, The Old Testament, The New Testament, and Carlyle's Hero and Hero-Worship. He read other religious books as well and started exploring theism, Hinduism, and other religions more seriously.

Finding suitable vegetarian food was still a problem for Gandhi and he kept exploring suitable places to eat. One day he found a good vegetarian restaurant. Salt's *Plea for Vegetarianism* was displayed in the window of this restaurant. Gandhi purchased a copy of the book and read it from cover to cover. The book made a profound impression on Gandhi. He says that earlier he was vegetarian because of the promise made to his mother, but now he became vegetarian by choice and decided to spread the message to others. Later Gandhi also read *The Ethics of Diet* by Howard Williams and *The Perfect Way in Diet* by Dr. Anna Kingsford. As time went on, Gandhi started experimenting to find substitutes for nonvegetarian items in his diet (such as, milk). These experiments continued for the rest of his life. At first Gandhi's motive in seeking vegetarian foods was nutrition, hygiene, health, and economy in expenditures. Later the motive also included spiritual purification and ultimate salvation.

Gandhi matured a lot during his stay in England and learned many useful lessons about the British social and political customs, ways of the people, English manners, and innocence, simplicity, and kindness of the folks. Gandhi passed his law examination and was called to the bar on June 10, 1891. He enrolled in the England High Court on June 11 and sailed back for India on June 12, 1891.

Back in India and Move to South Africa

Upon return from England, Gandhi was met by his elder brother at the Bombay port and was brought back to Rajkot, Gujarat. Gandhi's mother had died in the meantime while he was still in England. This fact had not been revealed to him and he felt sad. The caste squabbles had continued and even intensified. Gandhi's relationships with his wife remained

strenuous and did not improve. The law studies in England had prepared Gandhi for practicing British law and he had no knowledge of the Hindu and Muslim law or of Indian court system. These were the circumstances under which Gandhi settled in Rajkot and began his law practice. As befitting an England-returned attorney, Gandhi modernized his living. The expenditures were high, but income was meager. He kept his fees ten times the going rate and few clients would come to him. Meeting both ends was becoming difficult and getting harder day-by-day. Some friends advised Gandhi to go to Bombay and start his law practice there. They suggested that the big city would bring him more business, he would learn the Hindu and Muslim law, and also gain experience in a higher court. Gandhi moved to Bombay, but found that conditions there were even harder. Legal work came only if one agreed to pay a commission and Gandhi refused to do so. The study of the Hindu and Muslim law was tedious and more difficult than Gandhi had originally imagined. The expenditures in the big city went further up, without any corresponding increase in income. Gandhi also discovered that he did not have the needed ability to argue and contest the cases. Once he took the case of one Mamibai, but could not ask a single question in the court and another attorney had to take over the case. Thereupon, Gandhi decided that he would not to take other cases until he developed the ability to argue and contest them. Disappointed, Gandhi left Bombay and came back to Rajkot where he restricted his legal practice to drafting of briefs for other attorneys and somehow made both ends meet. At this time a Meman firm offered Gandhi a job in South Africa for one year to provide assistance in their long-pending legal case. Without hesitation or haggling for a higher salary, Gandhi accepted the offer and sailed for South Africa in April, 1893.

Upon reaching South Africa, it did not take Gandhi long to notice that the Indians and other colored people there were treated differently. Snobbishness and arrogance of the White people and the way they treated all others with prejudice and

contempt were so obvious. Colored people were referred to as "coolies" and thus there were "collie-laborers," "collie-clerks," "collie-businessmen," and "collie-bartenders." Gandhi, as a barrister, came to be known as "collie-barrister." Coolies lived in localities set apart for them, they could not own land, had no franchise rights, could not walk on the public footpaths, and without a permit issued by the master could not go out of doors after 9 P.M. Interaction of colored people with the White population was minimal and through their jobs, services, and business relations. Gandhi experienced many of the prejudices and discriminative practices firsthand. Once he was thrown off the train on way to Pretoria even though he had the first class ticket - only the Whites could travel by first class. At another time, he was made to sit on the outside of a coach when room was available inside and he was entitled to it. He also experienced difficulty in finding hotel accommodations and eating in dining commons with the Whites - these privileges were available only to the White population. He was once pushed off the footpath even though a White person was walking with him. Through these and other experiences, Gandhi realized that South Africa was not a suitable place for any self-respecting person. He felt like going back to India, but stayed on to fight the prevalent prejudices and discriminative practices.

Satyagraha Struggle in South Africa

Gandhi got in touch with the Indians living in Pretoria and Orange Free State and tried to assess their conditions. Indians were divided into various groups according to their regional, religious, language, and occupational backgrounds. Majority of them were indentured and non-indentured laborers of Tamil, Telugu, and North Indian backgrounds, some were Muslim merchants, and there were a few Parsi clerks. All of them had accepted the prevalent prejudices and discriminative practices as facts of life and no one had the desire to fight back and remove the oppressive circumstances. Gandhi

registered the help of a prominent Muslim businessman Sheth Tyeb Haji Khan Muhammad and called for a meeting of the Indians. It is here he delivered the first public speech and made Indians aware of the prevalent injustices and discriminative practices. He advised them to fight unjust laws while obeying just laws. He also advised them to disregard petty differences among themselves, follow only truthful practices in business, work, and public dealings, develop good sanitary habits, improve physical surroundings, create better self-image for themselves, learn English to communicate better, and form associations for free exchange of ideas and collective representation. Indians were to press for their rights only after their blemishes and weaknesses had been purged.

Gandhi succeeded in achieving many social and political reforms in South Africa. But his stay was also personally very beneficial for him. It is here that he got the first opportunity to engage in public service and recognized his ability and potential for it. He realized that the practicing of law did not need dubious practices. In fact, the secret of successful law practice was the use of only truthful and unselfish means. A successful attorney did not depend on cleverness, but on his desire to pursue the truth under all circumstances. Gandhi stressed that lawyers should settle as many cases out of the court as possible by bringing compromises among the clients and without caring for personal monetary gains. This approach, he said, saved the clients money and spared them of unnecessary hassle. Gandhi, himself, resorted to no falsehood in his law practice. He did not tutor his clients and witnesses and did not encourage them to lie. He did not take false cases and public service was his only motive in practicing law. Whether a client won or lost, Gandhi expected only his fees and charged out-of-pocket expenses (sometimes not even that). Once Gandhi discovered that a client had lied to him and he told the judge to dismiss the case. Gandhi concludes that it is possible to be truthful in the practice of law, as in other areas. These truthful practices of Gandhi endeared him to many and won him friends. Many of these people later

joined Gandhi as co-workers in his Satyagraha struggles in South Africa and India.

The legal case for which Gandhi had come to South Africa eventually got settled and it was time for him to go back. Gandhi returned to Durban to make necessary preparations for his departure to India. Abdulla Sheth arranged a farewell party for him and there Gandhi glanced at a newspaper and noticed an item entitled "Indian Franchise." This item was about a bill before the legislature which intended to bar the Indians from electing their representatives to the Natal Legislative Assembly. Gandhi was shocked and he made others aware of the news and its implications. The gathering was shocked too and they decided to fight the bill. Then and there the farewell party turned into a working group meeting. This laid the basis for a much longer stay for Gandhi in South Africa than he had originally intended. An organization entitled "Natal Indian Congress" was formed and a petition was written and submitted. Local newspapers and some overseas newspapers (e.g., *The Times of India* and *The London Times*) wrote favorably in favor of the Indians and Gandhi wrote two pamphlets (*An Appeal to Every Briton in South Africa* and *The Indian Franchise - An Appeal*) for distribution. Gandhi traveled to India to generate outside cooperation for his Satyagraha struggle in South Africa. He wrote another pamphlet (*Green Pamphlet*) for circulation, met with prominent Indian leaders, and sought meetings with the editors of important newspapers. Some of these newspapers published commentaries and articles on the situation of Indians in South Africa. Gandhi additionally held public meetings in major cities of India to make the public aware of the conditions of Indians in South Africa. Having done all this, he returned to South Africa in December 1896 and also brought his wife and children with him this time.

Upon reaching Durban, Gandhi was accused of condemning Natal Whites while on tour in India and bringing two shiploads of Indians with the specific purpose of swamping Natal with Indians. His ship was quarantined and

upon landing the mob grabbed him and pelted him with stones, brickbats, and rotten eggs. Others battered, boxed, and lynched him. If it were not for the brave effort of the wife of the Natal Superintendent of Police, Gandhi would have lost his life. Later Gandhi was asked to file charges against the attackers, but he refused to do so indicating that the problem was of widespread poisoning against the Indians by the Natal authorities and not of the public as such. Gandhi acted nicely and with good faith, but the Whites instead of feeling remorseful introduced two additional bills in the Natal Legislative Assembly. One bill aimed at adversely affecting the Indian traders and the other to severely restrict future immigration from India. Gandhi took note of these bills and expanded his Satyagraha struggle.

Gandhi felt that the Satyagraha struggle in South Africa needed a communication channel to properly communicate with the public as well as with the South African government. He established a weekly, *Indian Opinion*, in 1904. In this magazine, he published true accounts of the ongoing Satyagraha struggle and current conditions of the Indians. Both the Indians and Whites eagerly awaited this publication in order to read the published accounts. Later Gandhi also established two other weekly magazines in India, *Navajivan* and *Young India*, to promote the Satyagraha struggle there. Gandhi believed that written word was an important form of communication and the goal of journalism was to provide true accounts of the happenings to the public. *Indian Opinion* was moved to a new location in 1904, a settlement founded by Gandhi to put Ruskin's ideas of simplicity and self-sufficiency into practice. This settlement was two-and-a-half miles from Phoenix and fourteen miles from Durban and covered one hundred acres of newly purchased land. Gandhi's idea was to retire from the law practice, earn livelihood through manual labor at the settlement, and experience the joy of service to others. Parcels of land were allocated to the inhabitants and living quarters were constructed through self-help measures. Everyone was expected to provide labor and services

according to own talent and capacity and be paid the same. This experiment in simple living and high thinking had hardly begun when Gandhi had to move back to Johannesburg to further pursue the needs of the Satyagraha struggle. The experiments in simplicity and self-sufficiency, however, continued. The house furnishings in Johannesburg were kept minimal and simple, physical labor was required of each inhabitant, and no servants were engaged to service and manage the dwelling. This was also the time when Gandhi's interests in pure diet, fasting, natural healing, brahmacharya, and putting purity of thought, word, and deed into practice grew and he started experimenting in these areas. These experiments continued at the Tolstoy Farm, another settlement founded by Gandhi at the peak of the Satyagraha struggle in South Africa.

The Satyagraha struggle in South Africa focused on many social and political issues (see: *Gandhi's Satyagraha in South Africa*) and among them was also Gandhi's experiment in education. Gandhi was dissatisfied with the public education system and thought that this system aimed at providing only physical means for living and did not address the needs of holistic living, overall development, and building of proper social and moral character. Gandhi, therefore, started an experiment where physical, mental, moral, and spiritual needs were emphasized in addition to the literary and vocational education. Boys and girls received education in the same classroom and teachers were people of high integrity and sound moral character. They were to teach more by personal example than through the textbooks, were to be proper role models, were responsible for the shortcomings of the students, and were to touch the heart of the students. Teaching responsibility was shared by the parents, teachers, and community alike and in unison they were to create a learning environment of excellence and generate suitable social and moral character. Students were to become good citizens, have proper goals in life, live altruistically, and learn proper values, attitudes, behaviors, and modes of conduct. Rules of conduct

were the same for all and all were to practice what they preached. Life was to be wholesome and balanced. Just as the body needed food and exercise to be healthy, so also did the mind and spirit. The emphasis of development, accordingly, was on all the three. Physical labor in particular was emphasized and glorified by Gandhi and all were to engage in physical labor and earn livelihood through the sweat of labor irrespective of the occupational pursuits. When Gandhi conducted this experiment, he was too busy with the demands of the Satyagraha struggle, available help was meager, resources were few, and other people were not at par with Gandhi in terms of their integrity and spiritual strength. The experiment, therefore, did not succeed as expected and was abandoned after a short run.

Satyagraha Struggle in India

The Satyagraha struggle in South Africa was concluded in 1914 and Gandhi returned to India via London at the instruction of Gokhale. Gandhi reached London on August 6, 1914 and discovered that the Great European War had been declared just two days before his arrival. Like he had done in the Boer War and Julu Rebellion in South Africa, Gandhi offered his services to help and nurse the wounded. This he did in the presence of his own dilemma that he was indirectly cooperating with the forces of violence and also against the advice of some friends who emphasized that the weak position of the British should be used to gain better conditions for India. Gandhi chose not to take advantage of the weak position of the British. He at that time had faith in the British rule of India and felt that prevalent injustices and corruption were the fault was of individual British officers and not of the British ruling system as such. This opinion of Gandhi changed quickly when he started traveling from London to India and noticed firsthand the arrogance of British officers and the way they behaved as masters and treated Indians as inferiors.

Upon reaching Bombay Gandhi was received and welcomed by Gokhale. He urged Gandhi to participate in the Indian freedom struggle and promised his support and guidance. He advised Gandhi to first become familiar with the conditions of Indian people by traveling widely in India. Gandhi accepted his advice and for months traveled in different parts of India. The British rulers became apprehensive of Gandhi's travels and feared negative consequences. Gandhi, however, made it clear to them that he will hide nothing and all his activities will remain in the open as was the case in South Africa. After finishing his travels, Gandhi joined the Indian Congress Party and participated in the Indian freedom struggle. Much of what happened afterwards is detailed in Gandhi's *Autobiography: My Experiments With Truth*. Here, a few examples of his role in the Indian freedom struggle have been presented.

Champan Struggle

The Champan struggle is an example of Gandhi's role in the Indian freedom struggle. Tinkathia system in Bihar required the tenants to plant indigo in three out of every twenty parts of the land. This compulsory planting posed financial hardships for the tenants and they requested Gandhi to come and alleviate their difficulties. Gandhi accepted the invitation and proceeded with his inquiry in spite of an eviction order against him by the British rulers. He heard complaints of the tenants in the presence of C.I.D. officials and also listened to the viewpoints of the landlords. Gandhi's effort eventually resulted in an official inquiry and the century-old Tinkathia system was abolished. Through the Champan struggle Gandhi demonstrated to the public some principles of the Satyagraha struggle. The public learned for the first time how to present nonviolent resistance to unfair laws and respect the fair laws, how to direct the struggle against tyranny and not against the tyrant, how to win government functionaries as sympathizers by not making them

the target of resistance, how not to yield to coercion even in the presence of extreme pressure, how to consider honestly opinions of all the parties in the dispute without prejudice and prejudgment, and how to resort only to peaceful means and thereby empower the participants and alleviate the problem. Time and again Gandhi demonstrated these principles at different junctures of the Indian freedom struggle.

Mill Dispute and Kheda Struggle

The mill dispute in Ahmedabad and the Kheda struggle of the Patidars present two more examples of Gandhi's role in the Indian freedom struggle. In the first case, Gandhi advised the mill workers to go on strike for removal of their grievances even though the mill owners were his friends. Gandhi advised the mill workers not to depend on any outside help or resources, not to yield to pressure no matter how long the strike continued, not to lose patience and self-respect, and not to resort to violence of any kind. The strike in the mill continued for twenty-one days and ultimately the terms were settled in favor of the mill workers. The Kheda struggle was not as successful, but the participants learned lessons in civility, fearlessness, and not to project ill-will at the opponent. They also learned that money was less important in Satyagraha struggle and more important were will, determination, and sense of sacrifice. The Kheda struggle marked the beginning of an awakening among the peasants of Gujarat.

Satyagraha Ashram

The founding of Satyagraha Ashram in Ahmedabad, Gujarat on May 25, 1915 is the third example of Gandhi's role in the Indian freedom struggle. This name was chosen, as it indicated both the goal and the method of Indian freedom struggle. Rules and regulations for the Ashram were written and adopted. These were to be followed equally by all inhabitants of the Ashram. The rules pointed to the

observance of Truth, Ahimsa, *brahmacharya*, control of the palate, non-stealing, non-possession, simplicity, fearlessness, removal of untouchability, bread labor, tolerance of differences, Swadeshi, humility, and importance of the vows (see: Gandhi's *Ashram Observances in Action*). Twenty-five men and women from South Africa and India started living in the Ashram and others joined later. The Ashram had been in existence for only a few months when an untouchable family wanted admission into it. This was unusual because according to the Indian tradition high and low castes were supposed to live and function separately. The residents of the Ashram and those who financially supported it presented strong opposition. Gandhi, however, argued that all people were equal and had to be treated as such. Eventually the untouchable family was admitted into the Ashram. Symbolically this marked the beginning of Gandhi's struggle against untouchability in India, to which later other social problems like communal disharmony, unequal treatment of women, problems of peasants, and treatment of laborers, tribal people, and prostitutes were added.

Home Rule

Gandhi had originally conceived of a home rule for India within the British empire (see: Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj*). But after noticing the unjust practices of the British rulers, Gandhi felt that India must gain complete freedom from the British rule and must form own government in accordance with the needs and wishes of the people. In a letter to the Viceroy of India, he expressed this idea emphasizing that the Indian people were ready for self-government and they would sacrifice anything to achieve this goal. The response to Gandhi's letter came in the form of Rowlatt Committee's report and Rowlatt Bill was introduced in the parliament for causing further repression of the Indians. Gandhi resorted to the Satyagraha struggle once again using the familiar weapons

of civil disobedience, non-cooperation, and general strikes all over India.

Gandhi noticed the dependence of Indians on foreign goods, which created their poverty, instilled in them sense of helplessness and lack of self-sufficiency, and weakened their will power to fight injustices. He, therefore, introduced the concept of Swadeshi - dependence on own talents, means, and resources as far as possible. The spinning wheel and Khadi were symbolic representations of Swadeshi. Gandhi also emphasized elimination of untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, and removal of other social and political evils. The Satyagraha struggle, accordingly, was not just a weapon for gaining the freedom of India but also a means for self-empowerment and self-purification of the people and bringing in them self-discipline, self-sacrifice, and compassion for others. Satyagrahis were expected to take all the blows of the perpetrator and never strike back - something only the strong, truthful, determined, and compassionate people could do and not the weak ones.

Quit India Movement

The struggle for home rule changed into "Quit India" movement and its painful history is illustrated by such events as the Salt March and Jalianwala Bagh Massacre. India finally won her freedom on August 15, 1947, but the country was divided into India and Pakistan. The mass migration of Hindus and Muslims which followed was unique in the history of the subcontinent and the loss of life and suffering is still fresh on the minds of many. Gandhi spent his final days trying to bring Hindu-Muslim unity and was assassinated on January 30, 1948 by a Hindu fanatic for that reason. Thus, a great man died and a remarkably innovative era came to an end. Two days before his death, Gandhi had remarked: "...don't worry about me. If I am to die by the bullet of a mad man, I must die smiling. There must be no anger with me. God must reside in my heart. Promise me that should such a thing

happen, you are not to shed a tear" (Acharlu, 1985, p. 179).

The Man

Gandhi was an extraordinary man. Both his friends and critics agreed that he was extremely witty, intelligent, full of practical wisdom, formidable opponent, and a shrewd politician. People called him "Bapu," meaning father-figure. Others addressed him as "Mahatma" or a great soul. All admired his openness, honesty, unselfishness, strength of character, all-embracing compassion, and life-long service to others. They showered upon him respectful pleasantries of many kind. Gandhi had faith in the good side of human nature, strength of the people, and efficacy of the nonviolent measures. He distinguished between the wrong and the wrong-doer and stressed that it was the wrong that needed to be eradicated without causing harm to the wrong-doer. For those who wanted to fight unfairness and injustice, he was a natural leader and an impeccable role model. He seemed to understand most complex human problems and was able to find solutions for them with relative ease. He had the ability to touch the heart of common man and encourage him to fight injustice through persuasive and nonviolent means. Yet Gandhi described himself as "only a seeker of Truth," "an average man with less than average ability," and one who had nothing new to teach this world since his ideas were as old as the hills. It was this extreme humility of Gandhi which endeared him to all and won him friends even among foes.

Gandhi worked hard throughout his life to follow the principles of Truth, Ahimsa, simplicity, and love and thereby achieve soul perfection and salvation. His life-long struggle was focused on the problems of poor, destitute, and downtrodden people and he emphasized that through service to others, simple and non-pretentious living, and by following high moral and spiritual standards could one attain true happiness and peace. Gandhi never held any official position or title during his life and yet today he is held in high esteem

all over the world. Louis Fischer (1950, p. 12) remarks: "No one tried so hard and with so much success to live a life of Truth, kindness, self-effacement, humility, service, and nonviolence, through a long, difficult struggle against mighty adversaries." Nanda (1965, p. 9) points out: "Few men in their lifetime aroused stronger emotions or touched deeper the chords of humanity than did Gandhi."

Underpinnings of Gandhian Thought

The following are some salient features Gandhi thought:

- * Human nature is noble. It is the wrong attitudes, orientations, goals, and modes of conduct which make people less noble.
- * People are fundamentally equal despite the differences of nationality, caste, color, creed, gender, etc. They should receive the same status and respect in the society.
- * People are strong. All they need is removal of injustices and oppressive circumstances.
- * Goals of life are happiness, satisfaction, and ultimately salvation. These are achieved by following higher moral and spiritual standards and through proper attitudes, orientations, goals, modes of conduct.
- * Satisfactory living is harmonious, cooperative, shared, and wholesome. Living arrangements and functioning should be developed accordingly.
- * Living order has to be egalitarian and living means should be held in joint trusteeship.
- * Needs of living are at physical, mental, moral, and spiritual levels and all these should be attended to for a truly happy and satisfying living.
- * Living has to be altruistic in order to be satisfying and uplifting.
- * Problems of living should be addressed in nonviolent and persuasive manners. Violence does not solve any problem.
- * People should not tolerate unfairness, injustice, or

oppression of any kind. These should be offered active but nonviolent resistance.

- * Sought solutions to the problems should be just, holistic, and permanent. They should deliver equal justice to all and not mere exchange of places between the advantaged and disadvantaged.
- * Individual is fundamental unit of the social order and the focus of all welfare planning and policy-making. Societal welfare should come through the goals and planning for individual welfare.
- * Welfare planning and policy-making should involve all citizens and the rewards should be egalitarian and equal. The greatest good of greatest number of people, as in Western utilitarian thought, is not enough.
- * Welfare planning and policy-making should be holistic, balanced, and should cover physical, mental, moral, and spiritual dimensions of living.
- * Welfare planning and policy-making should have noble goals. The chosen means are as important as the goals.
- * Welfare planning and policy-making should follow the principles of Truth, Ahimsa, simplicity, and compassion. These principles should be followed sincerely and at the thought, word, and deed levels.
- * Welfare of the societies should evolve spontaneously and naturally through daily conduct of the citizens. Legislative and political encroachments in this regard should be as few as possible.
- * Character-building is an important aspect of societal development and of welfare planning and policy-making. Character-building is attained through a genuine effort for: 1) choosing personal attitudes, orientations, goals, and modes of conduct according to the societal goal of a happy and satisfying life for all, 2) developing attitudes of cooperation, other-orientation, and self-sacrifice at all levels, 3) following the principle of Truth, Ahimsa, simplicity, compassion, chastity, control of the palate, non-possession, non-stealing, fearlessness, tolerance of

differences, self-dependence, bread labor, and humility, 4) discarding all tendencies of exploitation and cheating, 5) shedding petty differences among people and societies, and 6) keeping the undertaken vows to the end.

- * Horizontal structures are better for living and functioning, as vertical structures push their weight on the lower structures and are repressive. Horizontal structures help foster freedom and dignity of the individual and self-dependence and self-sufficiency of the communities.
- * Decentralization of power at all levels is necessary for democratic functioning.
- * Production, consumption, functioning, and deliver of justice have to be local. These foster freedom and dignity of the individual and self-dependence, self-determination, and self-sufficiency of the communities.
- * Village and town crafts are important aspect of the culture. These should be preserved and encouraged.
- * Indigenous talents, resources, and means should be used as far as possible.
- * Use of technology should be minimum and of a low level.
- * Return to village and town orientations is important for a truly happy and satisfying living.
- * New systems of education and political participation are necessary for bringing proper enlightenment among people and self-dependence at different levels. The idea of self-dependence also includes the notion of self-scrutiny and self-discipline.
- * Reordering of the social order may be necessary to achieve the above mentioned goals of a happy and satisfying life for all.

Closing Comment

Gandhi's ideas about human and societal development center around the nobility of human nature, strong will of the individual, altruistic/egalitarian social order, and character-building at different levels through appropriate attitudes,

orientations, goals, and modes of conduct. The responsibility of achieving these lies with the individual and also with the organizations, institutions, governments, and other structures. All of them have work concertedly to correct existing problems and bring a happy and satisfying living environment. A sense of equality, fairness, and justice have to prevail and love and compassion have to guide various aspects of the societal functioning. Differences have to be respected and views of others have to be included in all aspects of welfare planning and policy-making. Solutions to the problems have to be non-exploitive, persuasive, and nonviolent and the focus has to be on both short-range and long-range problems. Gandhi demonstrated that no problem was too big to be handled and that massive changes were possible through the nonviolent strategies. Though the times and contexts have changed since Gandhi lived, yet his ideas are fresh and as relevant today as then. Gandhi serves as a good role model for all those who wish to follow his footsteps to bring peace and happiness to all.

This appendix is based on the following works by M. K. Gandhi (all published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad): *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments With Truth* (1927); *Satyagraha in South Africa* (1928); *From Yervada Mandir* (1932); *Hind Swaraj* (1938; original version 1909); *Constructive Programme* (1941); *Nonviolence in Peace and War* (1942); *Sarvodaya* (1954); *Ashram Observances in Action* (1955); *Unto This Last* (1956); *Character and Nation Building* (1959); *My Socialism* (1959); *Village Industries* (1960); and *Bread Labour* (1960).

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Appendix 2

Gandhi's Questions and Rajchandra's Replies¹

Q 1. What is the soul? Does it perform actions? Do the past actions impede its progress or not?

A. (1) As there are physical objects like a pot, a piece of cloth, etc., so there is an entity call the *atman*² whose essence is knowledge. The former are impermanent. They cannot exist through all time in the same form. The *atman* is an imperishable entity which exists eternally in the same form. Anything which is not the product of a combination of other elements is imperishable. We cannot think of the *atman* as being such a product, for, no matter in how many thousand different ways we combine material substances, such combinations cannot possibly produce life and consciousness. Every one of us can know from experience that by combining several elements we cannot produce in the compound a property which is not present in any of those elements. We do not find knowledge to be the essence of physical substances. If we change the forms of such substances and combine them, or if they change and combine by chance, the products will be of the same kind as they are; that is, they will be of a material nature and will not have knowledge as their essence. It is not possible, then, that the *atman*, which the seers describe as having knowledge as its essential character, can be produced by any substances like a pot, a piece of cloth, etc. The *atman* has knowledge as its essential character, whereas material substances are characterized by its absence. These are the eternal natures of the two. This and a thousand other reasons

prove the *atman* to be imperishable. Further reflection on the subject enables us to realize that the *atman* from its nature is imperishable. There is, therefore, no error or logical difficulty in believing that the *atman*, the existence of which is the cause of our experiencing happiness and suffering which also withdraws itself from either, and which is conscious of something which thinks and impels, is characterized by awareness as its essential nature and that, in virtue of this nature, it is an imperishable entity which exists eternally; on the contrary, belief in the *atman* has this merit of accepting truth.

(2) When the *atman* has attained a state of knowledge, the state resulting from a true understanding of its essence, it is the *karta*³ of that state, the state of illumination⁴ and of the resulting state of pure awareness, which is its true nature. In a state of ignorance, it is the *karta* of the emotions of anger, love, honor, attachment, greed, etc., and, when enjoying the fruits of these emotions, becomes, as the occasion may require, the *karta* of physical objects like a pot, a piece of cloth, etc., that is, it is not the creator of the original substance of those objects, but is only the *karta* of the action of imposing some form. This latter state is described in Jainism as *karma*, and in Vedanta as illusion or in other similar terms. If we reflect carefully on the matter, we shall clearly see that the *atman* cannot be the *karta* of physical objects or emotions like anger, this is *karta* only of the state of self-realization.

(3) The *karmas* performed while in the state of ignorance are like seed in the beginning and grow into a tree in course of time; in other words, the *atman* has to suffer the consequences of those *karmas*. Just as contact with fire produces the experience of heat, the natural end of which is pain, so the *atman*, being the *karta* of emotions of anger, etc., has to suffer, as consequence, pain in the form of birth, old age, and death. You should carefully reflect over this idea and ask me any question which may arise in your mind about it, for an understanding of the state from which the soul must withdraw itself and the effort to withdraw will bring

deliverance to it.

Q 2. What is God? Is He the creator of the universe?

A. (1) You, I, and other are souls suffering the bondage of *karma*. The soul's existence in its natural state, that is, in freedom from *karma* and purely as the *atman* that it is, is the state of being Ishvar.⁵ That which has the *aishvarya*⁶ of knowledge, etc., may be described as Ishvar. This Ishvarhood is the natural state of the *atman*, which is not revealed when it is engaged in *karman*. When the *atman*, however, realizes that being engaged in *karma* is not its real nature and fixes its attention on itself, then alone do omniscience, power, etc., manifest themselves in it and we can see nothing among all the objects in the universe with greater power than the *atman*'s. It is, therefore, my positive belief that Ishvar is another name for *atman* and does not signify a different Being of greater power.

(2) Ishvar is not the creator of the universe, that is, atoms, space, etc., can be conceived only as imperishable entities and not as created from some other substance. If it is stated that they came into being from Ishvar, that, too, does not seem likely; for, if we believe that Ishvar is a spirit, how can atoms, space, etc., come into being from Him? For it is impossible that matter can come into existence from that which is spirit. If Ishvar is regarded as material, He will then lose His Ishvarhood; also, a spiritual entity like the soul cannot come into being from such an Ishvar. If we regard Him as being both matter and spirit, that only means that we are pleased to call the world, which is both matter and spirit, by another name, Ishvar. Instead of doing that, it is better to call the world the world. If we hold that atoms, space, etc., are imperishable entities and that Ishvar only awards the fruits of *karma*, this, too, cannot be proved. Convincing reasons have been given in support of this view in *Shatdarshan-Samuchchaya*.⁷

Q. 3 What is *moksha*?

A. While the *atman* is in the state of ignorance, characterized by anger, etc., it is under the bondage of the body, and complete cessation of such a state, deliverance from it, is described by seers as *moksha*. A little reflection shows this to be logical and convincing.

Q. 4 Is it possible for a person to know for certain, while he is still living, whether or not he will attain *moksha*?

A. If our arms are tied with a rope wound several times round them and if the twists of the rope are loosened one after another, we feel the loosening of each twist and in the end become conscious of the rope having been removed. In like manner as the innumerable bonds, the products of ignorance, which bind the *atman* loosen one by one, the latter becomes conscious of progressing towards *moksha*, and when the bonds are about to fall off, the *atman* shines forth with the light of its essence and knows beyond doubt that it is about to be delivered from the bonds of ignorance. While still dwelling of its pure essence and of its absolute otherness and freedom from all relations. In other words, it is possible to experience the state of *moksha* even while living.

Q. 5 It is said that after his death, a man may, according to his actions, be reborn as an animal, a tree, or even a stone. Is this a fact?

A. After the soul has left the body, it attains a state according to the merit it has earned through its actions; hence, it may be born even as a lower creature, or may have even to assume a body of earth and, devoid of the other four senses, suffer the fruits of its *karma* through the sense of touch alone. This does not mean, however, that it becomes pure stone or earth. The soul assumes a body of stone, but, even then, it exists as soul, though its existence is not manifest to us. Since, in that condition, the other four senses are unmanifest, the soul may be described as having an earth-body. In the course of time, the soul leaves such a body after it has enjoyed the

fruits of its *karmas* and then the stone material exists as atoms and, because the soul has left it, does not possess the instinct of food, etc. In other words, the idea is not that stone itself, which is pure matter, becomes a soul. It is in order to enjoy the fruits of those *karmas* which, because of their hard nature, compels the soul to take on a body possessing only one sense, the sense of touch, the other senses remaining unmanifest, that it is born in an earth-body; it does not however become pure earth or stone. The body is like a garment to the soul, and is not its essence.

Q. 6 (The source does not state this question).

Q. 7 (The source does not state this question).

A. The answer to Q. 6 is contained in the reply given above as also the answer to Q. 7, which is that earth or stone as such cannot be the *karta* of any *karma*. It is the soul which has entered them and lives in them that is the *karta* of *karmas*, and even so, the relation between the two is like milk and water. Just as, even when they are mixed, milk is milk and water is water, so also the soul, through the binding effect of its *karmas* which confines it to the possession of one sense only, seems to have become stone or mere matter, but, in its essential nature, it is a soul and even in that state it possesses the instincts of hunger, fear, etc., though they remain unmanifest.

Q. 8 What is Arya Dharma? Do all Indian religions originate from the Vedas?

A. (1) In defining Arya Dharma, everyone has his own religion in view. Commonly a Jain describes Jainism, a Buddhist describes Buddhism, and a Vedantin describes Vedanta as Arya Dharma. But seers describe only that Arya-noble-path as Arya Dharma which enables the soul to realize its true nature, and rightly so.

(2) It is impossible that all religions had their origin in the Vedas. I know from experience that great souls like the *tirthankars*⁸ have revealed knowledge of a thousand times

deeper import than what the Vedas contain. I, therefore, believe that, since something imperfect cannot be the origin of a perfect thing, we are not justified in asserting that all religions originated from the Vedas. We may believe that Vaishnavism and other sects had their origin in the Vedas. It seems that the latter existed before the time of the Buddha and Mahavira, the last teacher of Jainism; it also seems likely that they are really ancient works. But we cannot say that only that which is ancient is true or perfect, nor that what came later is necessarily untrue or imperfect. Apart from this, the ideas propounded in the Vedas and in Jain doctrines have existed from the beginning of time; only the outward forms changed. There is no totally new creation or absolute destruction. Since we may believe that the ideas propounded by the Vedas and in the doctrines of Jainism and other religions have existed from the beginning of time, where is the room for controversy? All the same, it is only right that you and I, and others should reflect and consider which of these systems of ideas has more power-truth-in them.

Q. 9 Who composed the Vedas? Are they *anadi*?⁹ If so, what does *anadi* mean?

A. (1) The Vedas were probably composed a long time ago.

(2) No scripture, considered as a book, is *anadi*; but with respect to the ideas propounded in them, all scriptures are *anadi*, for there have been souls at all times who taught them in one form or another. It cannot be otherwise. The emotions of anger, etc., are *anadi* and so are those of forgiveness, etc. The way of violence, too, is *anadi*, as is the path of nonviolence. What we should consider is which of these conduce to the welfare of the soul? Both classes of things are *anadi*, though sometimes the one and sometimes the other may be predominant.

Q. 10 Who is the author of the Gita? Is God its author? Is there any evidence that He is?

A. (1) The replies given above partly answer this question;

if by God we mean a person who has attained illumination-perfect illumination-then we can say that the Gita was composed by God. If, however, we accept God as being all-pervading, like the sky, eternally existing and passive, the Gita or any other book cannot have been composed by Him. For, writing a book is an ordinary activity undertaken at a particular point in time and is not *anadi*.

(2) The Gita is believed to be the work of Veda Vyasa and, since Lord Krishna had propounded this teaching to Arjuna, He is said to be its real author. This may be true. The work is indeed great. The ideas it propounds have been taught from time immemorial, but it is not possible that these same verses have existed from the beginning of time. Nor is it likely that they were composed by God, who does nothing. They must have been composed only by an embodied soul, who acts. There is no harm, therefore, in saying that a perfectly illuminated person is God, and that a *shastra*¹⁰ taught by him is one revealed by God.

Q. 11 Does any merit accrue from the sacrifices of animals or other things?

A. It is always sinful to kill an animal, to give it as an offering in sacrifice, or injure it in any way, even if this is done for the purpose of a sacrifice or living in the very abode of God. The practice of giving gifts at the time of a sacrifice does earn some merit, but since this is accompanied with violence it, too, deserves no commendation.

Q. 12 If a claim is put forward that a particular religion is the best, may we not ask the claimant for proof?

A. If no proof is required and if any such claim is made without proof in its support, reason and unreason, *dharma* and *adharma*,¹¹ everything will have to be accepted as "the best." Only the test of proof can show what is the best and what is not. That religion alone is the best and is truly strong, which is most helpful in destroying the bondage of worldly life and can establish us in the state which is our essence.

Q. 13 Do you know anything about Christianity? If so, what do you think of it?

A. I know something in general about Christianity. Even a little study of the subject will show that no other country has gone so deep as India and discovered a religious path which can rival the one discovered by the great seers of India. Among the other religions, Christianity asserts the eternal subjection of the soul, even in the state of *moksha*. It does not give a true description of the anadi state of the soul, of the law of *karma* or of the cessation of *karma*, and I am not likely, therefore, to accept the view that it is the best religion. It does not seem to offer a satisfactory solution of the problems, which I have mentioned. I am not making this statement in a sectarian spirit. If you wish to ask more questions on this, you may, and then it will be possible for me to resolve your doubts still further.

Q. 14 The Christians hold that the Bible is divinely inspired and that Christ was an incarnation of God, being his Son. Was He?

A. This is a matter of faith and cannot be proved rationally. What I said above concerning the claim that the Gita and the Vedas are divinely inspired, may be applied to the Bible too. It is impossible that God, who is free from birth and death, will incarnate Himself as a human being; for it is the changes of attachment, aversion, etc., which are the cause of birth and it does not appeal to reason that God, who has no attachment and aversion, will take birth as a human being. The idea that Jesus is, and was, the Son of God may perhaps be acceptable, if we interpret the belief as an allegory; otherwise, tested by canons of reason, it is difficult to accept. How can we say that God, who is free, has had a Son? If we assert that He has or had one, what was the manner of the Son's birth? If we believe that both God and His Son are *anadi*, how can we explain their being Father and Son? These and other objections deserve examination. If we reflect over them, I think the belief will not be found acceptable.

Q. 15 Were all the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in Christ?

A. Even if they were, that should only make us think about the two scriptures. Nor is the act of the prophecies having been fulfilled a sufficiently strong reason to justify us in asserting that Jesus was an incarnation of God, for the birth of a great soul can also be predicted with the help of astrology. Even if, however, someone foretold the event by virtue of his knowledge, unless it is established that that person had perfect knowledge of the path to *moksha*, the fact of his having predicted a future event appeals only to faith as proof of a thing and we cannot believe that no reasoning on the opposite side can diminish its force.

Q. 16 (This translation omits the statement of this question).¹²

A. In this question you ask about the miracles attributed to Jesus Christ. If it is said that he put a soul back into the body which it had left, or that he put another soul in its place, this could not possibly have been done. If it could be done, the law of *karma* would lose its meaning. Apart from this, mastery of yoga techniques enables a person to perform certain miracles, and if it is claimed that Jesus had such powers, we cannot assert that the claim is false or impossible. Such yogic powers are of no consequence compared to the power of the *atman*; the latter is infinitely greater than the powers attained by yoga. You may ask more questions on this subject when we meet.

Q. 17 Can anyone remember his past lives or have an idea of his future lives?

A. This is quite possible. One whose knowledge has become pure may be able to do so. We can infer the possibility of rain from certain signs in the clouds; similarly, from the actions of a soul in this life, we can understand, perhaps partially, their causes in its previous existence. We can also judge from the nature of the actions what results they

are likely to have. On further reflection, we can also know what kind of a future existence the soul is likely to have, or what kind of a past existence it had.

Q. 18 If yes, who can?

A. The answer to this is contained in the reply above.

Q. 19 You have given the names of some who have attained *moksha*. What is the authority for this statement?

A. If you have addressed this question personally to me, I may say in reply that one can to some extent infer from one's own experience how a person, whose involvement in earthly existence is about to end, is likely to speak or act, and on the basis of this one can assert whether or not such a person attained *moksha*. In most cases, we can also get from *shastras* reasons in support of our conclusion.

Q. 20 What makes you say that even Buddha did not attain *moksha*?¹³

A. On the basis of the teachings of Buddhist scriptures. If his views were the same as these, then they seem to have been inconsistent with one another, and that is not a mark of perfect illumination. If a person has not attained perfect illumination, his attachments and aversions are not likely to disappear so long as he is in such a state; earthly experience is a necessary consequence. One cannot, therefore, claim such a person to have attained absolute *moksha*. Moreover, it is impossible for you and me to know from independent sources that the Buddha's views were different from those contained in the teachings attributed to him. Even so, if it is asserted that his views were in fact different and proof given in support of the assertion, there is no reason why we should not accept that as possible.

Q. 21 What will finally happen to this world?

A. It does not seem rationally possible to me that all souls will attain absolute *moksha*, or that the world will perish

completely. It is likely to continue to exist for ever in the same state as at present. Some aspect of it may undergo transformation and almost disappear, and another may grow; such is the nature of the world that, if there is growth in one sphere, there is decline in another. Having regard to this fact, and after deep reflection, it seems impossible to me that this world will perish completely. By "world" we do not mean this earth only.

Q. 22 Will the world be morally better off in the future?

A. It would not be proper to encourage any soul which loves immorality to take wrong advantage of the answer to this question. All modes in this world, including morality and immorality, have existed from the beginning of time. But it is possible for you and me to eschew immorality and accept morality, and it is the duty of the *atman* to do that. It is not possible to assert that immorality will be given up by all and morality will prevail, for such an extreme state cannot come about.

Q. 23 Is there anything like total destruction of the world?

A. If by *pralaya* is meant total destruction, that is not possible, for complete destruction of all that exists is impossible. If by *pralaya* is meant the merging of everything in God, the belief is accepted in some doctrines but that does not seem possible to me. For, how can all objects and all souls arrive in an identical state so that such a thing may happen? If they ever do, then diversity cannot develop again. If we accept the possibility of *pralaya* on the supposition of unmanifest diversity in the souls and manifest sameness, how can diversity exist except through connection with a body? If we believe that such connection exists in the state of *pralaya*, we shall have to believe further that all souls will have one sense only and in doing so we shall reject, without reason, the possibility of other modes of existence. In other words, we shall have to suppose that a soul, which had attained a higher state and was about to be free for ever from the contingency

of existence with one sense only, had none the less to be in such a state. This and many similar doubts arise. A *pralaya* involving all is impossible.

Q. 24 Can an illiterate person attain *moksha* through *bhakti*¹⁴ alone?

A. *Bhakti* is a cause of knowledge and knowledge of *moksha*. If by an illiterate person we mean one without knowledge of letters, it is not impossible that he may cultivate *bhakti*. Every soul had knowledge as its essence. The power of *bhakti* purifies knowledge, and pure knowledge becomes the cause of *moksha*. I do not believe that, without the manifestation of perfect knowledge, absolute *moksha* is possible. Nor need I point out that knowledge of letters is contained in perfect spiritual knowledge. It cannot be true that knowledge of letters is a cause of *moksha* and that, without it, self-realization is not possible.

Q. 25 Rama and Krishna are described as incarnations of God. What does that mean? Were they God Himself or only a part of Him? Can we attain salvation through faith in them?

A. (1) I, too, am convinced that both were great souls of great holiness. Each of them, being an *atman*, was God. If it is a fact that all the coverings over their *atman* had fallen off, there need be no dispute about their having attained absolute *moksha*. I do not think that any soul can be a portion of God, for I can think of a thousand reasons against such a belief. If we believe a soul to be a portion of God, the belief in bondage and *moksha* will have no meaning. For then, God Himself will be the cause of ignorance, etc., and, if that is true, He ceases to be God. In other words, in being regarded as Lord of the soul, God actually loses something from His status. Moreover, if we believe that the soul is a portion of God, what motive will a person have to strive for anything. In view of this and other objections, I am not prepared to believe any soul to be a portion of God; how, then, can I believe that such was the case with great and holy souls like Rama and Krishna? There

is no error in believing that these two were unmanifest God, but it is doubtful whether perfect Godhood had become manifest in them.

(2) The question whether we can attain *moksha* through faith in them can be easily answered. *Moksha* means absence of or deliverance from all forms of attachment, ignorance, etc. It can be attained when we cultivate faith in a person whose teaching will enable us to win such freedom from attachment and ignorance, and, reflecting on our true essence, come to have the same faith in our *atman* that we have in the teacher and identify ourselves with his personality. Worship of any kind other than this cannot win absolute *moksha*. It may help one to win the means of *moksha*, but even that cannot be asserted with certainty.

Q. 26 Who were Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva?

A. If people believed in three *gunas*¹⁵ as the cause of creation and personified them as Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, this or similar explanations may make the belief plausible. But I am not particularly disposed to believe that they are what the *Puranas*¹⁶ describe them to be, for some of the descriptions appear to be allegories intended for religious instruction. Even so, I think it would be better than we, too, try to profit from the instruction they contain rather than attempt in vain to ascertain the principles embodied in the personification of Brahma, and so on.

Q. 27 If a snake is about to bite me, should I allow myself to be bitten or should I kill it, supposing that that is the only way in which I can save myself?

A. One hesitates to advise you that you should let the snake bite you. Nevertheless, how can it be right for you, if you have realized that the body is perishable, to kill, for protecting a body which has no real value to you, a creature which clings to it with love? For anyone who desires his spiritual welfare, the best course is to let his body perish in such circumstances. But how should a person who does not desire spiritual welfare

behave? My only reply to such a question is, how can I advise such a person that he should pass through hell and similar worlds, that is, that he should kill the snake? If the person lacks the culture of Aryan¹⁷ character, one may advise him to kill the snake, but we should wish that neither you nor I will even dream of being such a person.

Notes and References

1. To an English-knowing person, this translation may be more readable. But it provides an overall meaning and sense of the communication. The other translation by Brahmachari Goverdhandas included in Chapter 4 is closer to the Gujarati version of the communication.
Note 1: It is emphasized that most of Rajchandra's answers are based on Jain philosophy. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
2. *Atman* or *atma* means soul.
3. *Karta* is the doer or creator.
4. Illumination here means the determination of what it truly is.
5. *Ishvar* is God as ruler of the universe.
6. *Aishvarya* ultimate power or wealth.
7. See: Chapter 4, footnote 19.
8. *Tirthankars* were self-realized souls, whose teachings evolved into Jain philosophy. See: Chapter 3 - Jainism and Jain Goal of Life.
9. *Anadi* is without a beginning.
10. *Shashtra* is a scripture.
11. Here *dharma* is something which is beneficial and works for the welfare of self and others. *adharma* is the opposite.
12. This question is stated in the translation included in Chapter 4.
13. This question was omitted in the translation included in Chapter 4.
14. See: Chapter 3, foot note 21 and Chapter 4, footnote 39.

15. *Gunas* refer to the three modes of illusionary energy *maya*; *satvic* (peace and enlightenment), *rajas* (passion and creation), and *tamas* (ignorance and delusion). See: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. Los Angeles: International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 1986; Radhakrishnan, S. and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.
16. *Purans* are a part of the Hindu scriptures.
17. Aryan is noble.

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On my life there is such a constant influence of Rajchandra that I can not describe. I have very deep feelings from him. For years, I have been in search of highly religious people. So far, I have not found another person who could equal him. He possessed knowledge, renunciation, and devotion and was free from pretense, factionalism, passion, and jealousy. He had a divine power through which he could make full use of available contexts and opportunities.

- Mahatma Gandhi