

Laghurajswami

THE LIFE OF H. H. LAGHURÄJSWÄMI (PRABHUSHRI)

### Humble Statement

We are presenting herewith the life of H.H. Laghuräjswämi, who gained self-realization by getting the conviction of Self through the Graceful Lord Shrimad Rajchandra, the great philosopher and spiritualism incarnate. By virtue of innate compassion he turned the liberation-seekers towards well being of soul with his right teaching. His benevolent in rendering their rare human lives fruitful was thus supreme.

Reverend Brahmachärijee, who had dedicated his life at the service of the great Saint Laghuräjswämi, who had resorted to the commands of Graceful Lord and had continually endeavored to turn the liberation-seekers towards the same, had prepared first 15 sections of this biography. The remaining sections have been prepared by Rävjibhä Desai with high sense of reverence.

It is a pleasure to present this life story of H.H. Prabhushri in a book form on the occasion of his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. His highly meritorious activities have helped in turning this Äshram from the wilderness to a blissful abode of wholesome contact. We humbly wish that this biography of the great man may serve as inspiration to the liberation-seekers in proceeding towards the path of liberation.

Publisher

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Hun Dramaksam Hinpunya Pan Tuj Dwärpar Ävi Chadhyo,  
Susthit Shrimad Rajchandra Tani Krupa Najare Padyo;  
Tyän Sant Shri Laghuräjswämi Premsah Säme Malyä.  
Muj Drashtirog Matädvä Jäte Parishramamän Bhalyä.

Despite having little wholesome Karma like that of a smih-blower I happened to come at your door and came in favorable view of Shrimad Rajchandra's establishment. There Saint Laghuräjswämi saw me affectionately and joined in the endeavor of curing my disease of wrong perception.

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Guru Räjanä Vishwäsroop Äsan Adol Raho Ure,  
Swaswaroop-Tanmayatäroopi Avagähanä Nij Gun Dhare;  
Ne Tyäg Jag-Vismrutiroop Vali Dhyän Sant Swaropanun.  
Ati Nirvikalpa Thavä Vikalpo Janmatä Maravä Ganun.

Let me have inflexible faith at heart in Guru Rajchandra, deeply hold the attribute of remaining tuned to my true nature, undertake renouncement in the form of forsaking the world, contemplate over the state of saint and treat all fancies as death so as to gain the absolute state.

Äshcharyakar Ächärya Padavine Dipävi Gautame,  
Pote Na Kevaljnäni Pan Shishyo Vare Keval Krame;  
Gurubhakti To Khari Temani Jenun Hraday Veeramän Rame,  
Shrutkevali Pan Shir Pare Guru-Än Dhäre Udyame.

Lord Gautamswämi amazingly brightened up the state of Ächärya by leading his pupils to omniscience even though he was not the omniscient. True devotion to Guru lies in holding Lord Mahaveer at heart; even Shrutkevalis (enlightened masters of the scriptures) enthusiastically hold the commands of Guru at heart.

Kalikälmän Pan Satya Evi Bhakti Guruni Sambhave,  
Evo Anubhav Äpatä Laghuräj Mein Dithä Have;  
Nihshank Märg Batävatä Je Märg Anubhavthi Juve,

Shir Dharma Jokham Dhärine Sadguru-Krupäbal Forave.

I have now come across Laghuräjswämi, who has experienced true devotion to Guru even in the present hard times; he shows the doubtless path based on his experience and spreads the grace of Guru while undertaking the responsibility upon his head.

Prajñävodh, Pushpa 3

## BIOGRAPHY OF H.H. LAGHURÄJSWÄMI (PRABHUSHRI)

AUM

Man Vachan Sharire Punya Sudhä Prakäshe, Tribhuvan Pan Jenä Upakäre Vikäshe;  
Pargun-Parmänu Giri Jevä Gani Je, Nij Ur Vikasäve Sant Te Ketlä Chhe?

How many saints could there be, who spread the wholesome ambrosia through the mind, word and body, whose benevolence to the universe stands illuminated, who magnify the minor virtue of others and help in developing the same?

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1

On account of the famine conditions prevailing in central Gujarat many years before, a Vaishav Bhävsär family migrated towards the West at Vatäman village in the area of Bhäl. They had only sickles and baskets in their hands and subsisted with manual labor. They used to save the surplus wheat and other grains that they could get in remuneration. Meanwhile there was a famine in that area. Since there were no railroads to transport grain from one place to another, the people had to depend upon local resources. As such, the grain-prices went up. The Bhävsär family could therefore make money by selling the accumulated surplus and came to be reckoned amongst the well to do families of the place. It gave up the labor-work and started the business of money lending. In due course it acquired real estate also. Sthänakwäsi (Not subscribing to idol worship) monks belonging to Khambhät group used to frequently visit Vatäman. By coming in their contact the said family changed its faith to Sthänakwäsi Jain sect.

Krishnadäs Gopalji belonging to the said family was living there during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was very practical and was a leading man of Vatäman. He had four wives, but did not get any child for a long time. At last one of his wives Kushalä became pregnant during the last year of his life. That time there had been an epidemic of cholera. Once Krishnadas rode over his mare and went for collecting the dues. On the way he was struck by cholera. Thereupon he was taken back home, but he could not survive and died.

2

The sun rises in the East, but its light spreads in all the directions. Similarly the pregnant widow Kushalä gave birth to a very lucky and estimable son in 1854. That led all the four widows to forsake the misfortune of widowhood. Since the boy happened to free the family from the disgrace of being childless, those four mothers as well as the people in the village loved him. He was named Lallubhäi and in due course he was sent to the village school. But Lallubhai had a short memory and could hardly make out the numbers. In order to teach him arithmetic the teacher used to send for the rock-pieces, ask him to divide them in lots of two, three, four pieces and count the same. That could give some idea of numbers to Lallubhäi.

After learning a little arithmetic, reading and writing Lallubhai left the school and started looking after the family shop. The accounting work relating to credits, debits, etc. was handled by the accountant. Lallubhai simply looked over and handled the business in a way that pleased everyone. At that young age he had acquired the knack of keeping the landowners, farmers, shepherds, Brahmins and other clients pleased by behaving well in dealing with

them.

He has mentioned two aspects of his childhood that show his inborn culture. That time boys used to put on silver bracelets on the wrists. Lallubhai and the boys in his relation also had that. Once they had been to other place and went to Jain temple. Being non-idolaters since generations, they had no faith in idols and had been there only for the sake of pleasure. That time other children would contemptuously hit the idols with bracelets, but Lallubhai did not like it and did not do so. While recalling that incident in the old age he used to tremble with the idea how people acquire terrific Karma out of ignorance. This shows that one, who is imbibed with the wholesome culture, naturally remains disinclined to undertake the sinful activities.

Once a relative belonging to the Swāminārāyan sect came to their place as a guest. The people of that sect take bath early in the morning. Lallubhai therefore took him to the well. The children generally think highly of the guests and newcomers, and like to help them. During the talks the guest told Lallubhai that one, who bathes with a pot of water while chanting 'Swāminārāyan', would gain salvation. On hearing it Lallubhai got eager for salvation; in that winter season he poured a pot of cold water over his head. This indicates the culture that he had brought forth from his earlier life, which induced him to the desire for salvation and to adopt the means for the purpose.

He was married at the right age. While his wife was pregnant, she ate too many guavas. Thereby her belly got blown up and she died. Thereafter he was married to Nāthibāi, the daughter of a Bhāvsār family of Vartej, Bhāvnagar. Thus he remained happy with the worldly life up to the age of twenty-seven.

On account of his generous approach many people came to him for borrowing money. Being honest and forthright they used to pay back the amount with interest in cash or in the form of grains, jaggery etc. If someone did not repay, this young man did not think of collecting the amount by extreme measures like going to court and confiscating the debtor's property. He also did not like to enter into animosity by using harsh words or resort to other acute means for collecting the same. He could manage by bringing pressure on such people through reputable persons of the place. Since money lending was, however, reaching a high peak and since the attitude of people was getting worse, he felt rather disgusted of continuing that business.

During 1881 he got afflicted with anemia. Despite resorting to several measures, the disease continued to grow and within a year his body was reduced to frailty. One physician gave the medication called Parpati and said that if he was destined to live, he would survive and his body would be strong. That medication, however, did not serve the purpose. There was another physician in nearby Dholkā. It was said that he treated only those patients, who could survive. Lallubhai went to him for getting the body examined. As the physician declined to treat him after examination, Lallubhai felt that he would not survive. Thereupon he brought sugar-cakes from Dholkā and started distributing to those, who came to see him.

He also exchanged the message of 'forgive and forget' with all the relatives. While doing that it occurred to him that his family was not different from those poor people, who earned their livelihood with manual labor. The property, wealth and reputation obtaining in his family were simply the consequences of the religious pursuit that he might have undertaken earlier. That earning would come to the end by availing the beneficial situations. If he therefore wanted happiness in future, he should resort to religious pursuit in the present life. While pondering over it he decided that if he got cured of the disease, he would renounce the worldly life and become a monk.

His practical wisdom, however, suggested that in the monastic life he should have a colleague, who could give sermons and discourses. It occurred to him that his neighbor and friend Devkaran had a sharp intellect; it would therefore be better if the latter also renounced simultaneously with him. Both of them used to go to Upāshray for performing Sāmāyik. While performing it once he asked Devkaran whether he would mind becoming his pupil, if he renounced. Devkaran did not consider it likely that the only son of the well to do family would renounce and agreed to become Lallubhai's pupil, if he renounced. That time Devkaran was in debt. When Lallubhai undertook to pay for that, Devkaran realized the sincerity of his intent.

In Vataman one person was selling medicinal packets. Mother Kushalā brought some packets and fed to her son. Thereby Lallubhai got many motions and was eventually cured of his disease. Everyone was pleased thereby. Lallubhai and Devkaran now thought of carrying out their intent of renouncing. For that purpose they decided to go to Guru Harakhchandji of Khabhāt, who was camping at Surat. In order to keep the secrecy they initially went to

Saylā on some pretext and after spending a couple of days there they boarded the train from Surendranagar and went to Surat. There they bowed to Guru and expressed their intent to renounce. The Guru, however, refused to initiate them without the permission of their parents.

On the other hand Kushalā was much agitated to hear about the matter. She took the accountant with her and went to Surat crying and lamenting. She promised in the witness of Guru that if Lallubhāi continued to hold detachment after staying two more years in worldly life, she would not prevent him from renouncing. Since there was no alternative, Lallubhai went back home and spent most of the time in religious activities. After having firm determination to renounce, he had thus to stay in the worldly life for two more years.

During that period his wife became pregnant and in 1884 she delivered a son, who was named Mohan. Everyone was pleased thereby, but Lallubhai and Devkaran now began to think of renouncing. By the time the boy was five weeks old, they went to Godhrā, where Harakhchandji was camping. After bowing to him they requested for initiation. The Guru induced them to increase their detachment, but declined to initiate without permission of the mother. Thereupon Lallubhai requested him to visit Vataman. The Guru agreed and stayed there for a month. During that time mother Kushalā learnt about the importance of detachment and also got the advantage of serving the Guru. At last with her permission it was decided to initiate both the men at Khambhāt on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Jyeshtha in Vikram era 1940 (about June of 1884). Accordingly the Guru went to Khambhāt and at an auspicious time on the fixed date both of them were initiated. Lallubhai was named as Lallujiswāmi and Devkaran as Devkaranswāmi. The latter was designated as the pupil of the former.

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At the time of Lallujiswāmi's initiation there had been very few monks in the Sthānakwāsi sect of Khambhāt. After his initiation the number of monks continued to rise and went up to fourteen. As such, every one, particularly Guru Harakhchandji, considered Lallujiswāmi's entry in the cadre as auspicious. Devkaranji and Lallujiswāmi studied and became well versed in scriptural and other religious compositions and strictly observed the monastic code. Devkaranji became known for his discourses and gained the popularity. By virtue of his straightforwardness, devotion and wholesome approach Lallujiswāmi, however, gained a place at the heart of everyone from Guru to other monks and nuns as well as of the lay people. Everyone felt that he would succeed to the position of Guru in due course and would enhance the stature of that position.

For five years after his initiation Lallujiswāmi used to observe fast on every alternate day; while he was at Kathor for the monsoon period, he observed 17 days' fast. Moreover, he was resorting to meditation along with the Guru. Late in the evening Harakhchandji used to undertake Kāusagga of Namutthunam for two hours. That time Lallujiswāmi also used to undertake the same. In spite of observing such rituals he could not overcome the sexual instinct. As such, he used to repeatedly ask the Guru about the same and was resorting chanting, austerities etc. as suggested. He, however, did not feel happy and satisfied till the said instinct was not uprooted. Later on he used to mention that he liked to sing devotional songs while sitting on the platform outside Upāshray. That time he did not have the concept of inner development.

Lālchand Vakhatchand Vakil was the head of Sthānakwāsi sect of Khambhāt and Ambālālbhāi was his adopted son. During 1889 the latter went to Ahmedabad along with Chhotālāl, the son of Mānekchand Fatehchand, in order attend a wedding ceremony. There they happened to see Joothābhāi Ujamshi and came to know that Shrimad Rajchandra was self-realized and that his teaching could be very beneficial. Thereupon Ambālālbhāi made copies of his letters addressed to Joothābhāi. Thereafter he wrote several letters to Shrimad inviting him to Khambhāt. Since there was no response, he wrote about his intent to go to Bombay. Then Shrimad replied that he would shortly arrive at Khambhāt.

Once Harakhchandji was giving discourse about Bhagvatisutra on the first floor of Upāshray and was sending the finished pages of the Sutra downstairs to Lallujiswāmi. The latter was discussing the same with Dāmodarbhāi. In one of the pages it was mentioned that no one can gain liberation till the time destined for that. Thereupon a doubt

arose in the mind of Lallujiswāmi about the purpose of renouncing, bearing of hardships etc, if the time for liberation was predestined. Meanwhile he noticed that Ambālālbhāi and other youngsters were reading something a little away. As such, he asked, 'Why are you not going to the discourse? Either go upstairs or come here.'

As they came to him, the question of predestination came up for discussion. Since they did not come across any clarification, it was decided to talk about it to Harakhchandji. Then Ambālālbhāi pointed out that Shrimad Rajchandra was expert in all the Āgams and he could clarify all such questions. He said that they had been reading his letters and added that Shrimad was to arrive at Khambhāt. While glancing at the letters Lallujiswāmi was impressed. He became eager to contact Shrimad and asked Ambālālbhāi to bring him to Upāshray when he arrived.

Sometime during October or November of 1890 Shrimad arrived at Khambhāt and at the instance of Ambālālbhāi and others he went to Upāshray. Since Harakhchandji had heard about his mnemonic capability, he requested for a display. Though Shrimad had given up such displays, in view of urging of Harakhchandji and perceiving the same as helpful in the long run, he gave some demonstrations. Thereafter Harakhchandji had scriptural discussions with Shrimad and in light thereof he highly praised Shrimad's knowledge in the presence of all.

Thereupon Lallujiswāmi asked for Guru's permission to learn from Shrimad about the implications of scriptures. As Guru granted it, he requested Shrimad to go upstairs. Accordingly when the latter came up, Lallujiswāmi fell at his feet three times in spite of the fact that the latter was a layman, while he himself had been a monk. Then Shrimad asked him what he was looking for. Lallujiswāmi said with folded hands that he was desirous of gaining the right perception and firm observance of celibacy. For a while Shrimad remained silent and then said, 'Okay'. Thereafter he held the first right toe of Lallujiswāmi, examined it and then went down. On the way home he told Ambālālbhāi that Lallujiswāmi had been spiritually oriented being since his previous life.

The next day Lallujiswāmi went to Ambālālbhāi's home for contacting Shrimad. The latter asked him in the solitude, "Why do you respect us?"

Lallujiswāmi: We feel very much pleased and affectionate to see you; it seems as if you had been our parents in the past birth. All fright disappears in your presence and we feel totally fearless.

Shrimad: How did you come to know of us?

Lallujiswāmi: We came to know from Ambālāl. We have been wandering since the infinity. Now please take care of us.

Shrimad then read to him some portion of Sutakrutāṅg and explained the right concepts about the true, untrue and mixed words. After that Lallujiswāmi used to regularly go to him during seven days Shrimad stayed in Khambhāt.

Once Lallujiswāmi said, "For firm observation of celibacy I have been fasting on every alternate day for last five years and also have been resorting to Kāusagga, yet it remains hard to overcome it mentally.

Shrimad: Do not observe fast from the worldly viewpoint. It is not worth to observe it for showing to the people. Observe it for giving up the taste and eat less than required; if you get tasteful food in alms, give the same to others.

Lallujiswāmi: I perceive everything that I come across as wrong, as illusion.

Shrimad: Perceive soul everywhere.

After Shrimad left for Bombay, Lallujiswāmi used to carry on correspondence with him through Ambālāl and gain the benefit of true knowledge. He passed the monsoon of 1891 at Vatāman, 1892 at Sānand and then went to Surat along with Devkaranji. Many people of Surat, who had business at Bombay, used to come to the discourses of Devkaranji. Being impressed thereby they requested him to go to Bombay for the monsoon. Accordingly Devkaranji and Lallujiswāmi went to Bombay for the monsoon of 1893.

Since Lallujiswāmi was keen to get in contact with Shrimad, he went to his shop after reaching Bombay.

Shrimad: How did you happen to come for monsoon to a semi-Äryan area like Bombay? Are the monks supposed to move to such semi-Äryan territory?

Lallujiswāmi: We have come here for monsoon in order to see you and to get in your contact.

Shrimad: Does anyone come in the way of your coming here?

Lallujiswāmi: No; can you spare for me about an hour daily?

Shrimad: Yes.

Thereafter Lallujiswāmi used to go to Shrimad's shop from time to time. On seeing him Shrimad used to retire to an adjacent room, read to him from Sutrakrutāṅg and explain the same to him. Lallujiswāmi once requested for getting Shrimad's picture. Since the latter did not heed to that, Lallujiswāmi repeated his request. Thereupon Shrimad wrote the following stanza on a piece of paper and handed over to him.

‘Sambujzahā Jantavo Mānussattam Datthum Bhayam Bālisen Alambho;  
Egantdukkhe Jari Eva Loe, Sakammanā Vipariyāsu Vei

(Oh people, try to understand and make out that it is rare to get the human birth; due to ignorance it is very rare to gain the discernment; know that the entire universe is afflicted with pain. it has been inadvertently undergoing the misery associated with birth, death etc. on account of Karma; ponder over it.)

After a few days Shrimad explained to Lallujiswāmi the first seven stanzas of Samādhishatak and gave the book to him for reading. By the time he went to the stairs, Shrimad called him back and wrote the following unique line on the first page of the book.

Ätam Bhāvanā Bhāvatān Jiv Lahe Kevaljnān Re,  
(One can attain omniscience by contemplating over the nature of soul)

Once Shrimad asked: Are you reading Samādhishatak?

Lallujiswāmi: Thinking that it would not be possible to read it in the hurry and bustle of Bombay, I have kept it in a bundle. I will start reading it earnestly after we leave Bombay.

By the end of monsoon Lallujiswāmi once said: I do not like all this. When can I stay forever tuned to soul?

Shrimad: You need to get instructions.

Lallujiswāmi: Please give the instructions.

Shrimad remained silent. He frequently used to urge for observing silence and considered it very beneficial. Thereupon Lallujiswāmi adopted silence for three years after he left Bombay. Exception was made only for speaking to the monks or for putting questions to Shrimad on spiritual matters. Reading of Samādhishatak, which was put off during the bustle of Bombay, was commenced during the journey towards Surat and he was experiencing unique peace thereby.

The monks passed the monsoons of 1894 and 1895 at Surat. Several persons there were well versed in Vedānt. By coming in contact with them and by reading the books of Vedānt, Devkaranji began to think himself as a godly

being. As Lallujiswāmi informed about it to Shrimad, the latter wrote as under.

“Coming to the decision on one’s own without resorting to contact of the enlightened is not the path of liberation. Every soul is godly; there is no doubt about it. As such, if Devkaranji thinks himself as godly, it is not wrong. But so long as the godly state does not accurately manifest, it is better to remain a liberation-seeker, a truth-seeker. The true godliness manifests that way. It is not possible to get the significance of that state while forsaking the right path and one merely happens to behave disrespectfully to the concept of omniscient Lords. There is no other problem. Death is surely going to overtake us.”

By reading that letter Devkaranji came back on the line. Thereafter when Shrimad came to Surat and saw the monks, Devkaranji complained, “When I come back from a sermon, Lallujiswāmi says that I indulged in arrogance; if I meditate, he terms it as fancy. Do the omniscient Lords have partiality to admit what he does and not mine?”

Shrimad (peacefully): “Whatever is done with self-indulgence is arrogance, it is foul; whatever is done as per commands of true Guru is blissful, is true in religious sense.”

At Surat Lallujiswāmi was having fever since long. During that time one Lallubhāi died after illness for about 12 months. Thereupon Lallujiswāmi felt that he might also pass away. So he wrote several letters to Shrimad requesting, “Lord, this body is now not likely to survive; if I leave without right perception, my human life would go in vain; so please endow me with the right perception.” Thereupon Shrimad sent to him the Letter of Six Fundamentals and compassionately wrote that it was not worth being afraid of death. Thereafter when he came to Surat, he elaborated the contents of that letter at length and explained its inner significance to Lallujiswāmi. He also recommended to memorize it and to repeatedly ponder over the same.

About the said letter Lallujiswāmi frequently used to say during the later years, “That letter has removed lot of our misconceptions. It did not allow us to stay in Sthānakwāsi fold; neither did it keep in Tapgachchha, nor allowed to enter Vedānt. Steering clear of all the sectarian differences, it kept us only on soul. It is a miraculous letter; it is a wonderful letter that can lead a deserving soul to contemplate about the right perception. It is worth memorizing and pondering over repeatedly.”

Guru Harakhchandji had died prior to Lallujiswāmi’s monsoon at Bombay in 1893. After coming in contact with Shrimad Lallujiswāmi’s faith had undergone change. The people came to know that he was treating a layman as his Guru and had given up fasting on the alternate day that he used to observe earlier. As such, popular regard for him had gone down. Lallujiswāmi ignored that and remained devoted to Shrimad.

Lallujiswāmi stayed at Khambhāt during 1896 monsoon. That time Ambālālbhāi and others used to take a day off on every full-moon day and spend it in devotion. On one full-moon day Lallujiswāmi also stayed with them overnight. It was the monsoon period and he stayed out at night without informing anyone. That led to great agitation in the sect. Lay people also did not like it and their regard for him went down further.

In 1896 Shrimad had been in Charotar area on a retreat for 10 weeks. After staying at Kāvithā he came to Rāraj. As Lallujiswāmi came to know about it, he thought that since he used to go out of Khambhāt for natural call, there should not be any objection to going a little further up to Rāraj and see Shrimad. As such, he once went towards Rāraj. On reaching the boundary of the village he sent a message to Ambālālbhāi that a monk had been calling him. Accordingly Ambālālbhāi came there and asked in a reproaching tone, “Why have you come here without getting the instructions?”

Lallujiswāmi: I am waiting here for the sake of instructions. If you consider it against the commands, I shall go back. Other liberation-seekers are getting the benefit of Shrimad’s contact, while I am left out. I have come because of the inability to bear the separation.

Ambālāl: I would not allow you to go back that way; I may have to face the reproach. So let me ask Shrimad in the matter and then do as he directs.

So saying he went to Shrimad and told him about Lallujiswāmi’s arrival. Thereupon Shrimad said, “If Muni is very anxious, I would go to see him and if he can feel at ease, let him go back.” As Ambālālbhāi gave the message to

Lallujiswāmi, he said, “I have to act as directed and am therefore going back.”

So saying he left with a heavy heart. On the way tears were flowing from his eyes with the idea that his ill luck did not permit him to see Shrimad. He spent that night with uneasiness. In the morning he got the news that Shrimad had sent Ambālālbhāi, Saubhāgyabhāi and Dungarshibhāi from Rāraj to Khambhāt. Accordingly Saubhāgyabhāi came to Upāshray and told Lallujiswāmi, “Shrimad would come to you and he has asked me to convey something to you alone.”

As such, both of them went to Ambālālbhāi’s home and Saubhāgyabhāi gave him the message of Shrimad. Thereafter he conveyed the Mantra of ‘Sahajātmaswaroop Paramguru’ (The supreme Guru abides at ease within the Self), and said that Shrimad had directed to turn five rosaries of Mantra everyday. Lallujiswāmi was overcome with joy and tears of delight came in his eyes. He requested Saubhāgyabhāi to convey the Mantra to other monks also, but the latter said that he was not authorized to do so.

After a few days Shrimad came from Rāraj to Khambhāt. Lallujiswāmi and five other monks went to receive him. Shrimad called all the six monks in a lonely place at Vadvā. They bowed to him and sat in front of him. Lallujiswāmi found it hard to bear the pangs of separation and he considered his Sthānakwāsi garb as an obstacle. Since his heart was overcome, he said, “Graceful Lord, please keep me at your service forever, I do not want Muhapatti (piece of cloth tied around the mouth).” So saying he put the Muhapatti in front of Shrimad. With tears in the eyes and in a choking voice he said, “I cannot bear the separation.”

On seeing it Shrimad’s delicate heart also was overflowed and tears came in his eyes. After remaining silent for a while he said to Devkaranji, “Give this Muhapatti to Lalluji and let him keep it for the present.”

Shrimad stayed at Vadvā for six days, during which many liberation-seekers could get the benefit of his talks. Lallujiswāmi and those five monks could get that benefit at lonely places. Other monks and the people belonging to the sect criticized the six monks, but they remained very firm in their faith. Moreover, Lallujiswāmi’s personality was so impressive that the people could not say anything in his presence.

From Vadvā Shrimad went to Nadiād, where he composed Ātmasiddhishāstra. Initially four copies were made, of which one was sent to Lallujiswāmi with the instructions that he should study it alone, and that it would be helpful to Devkaranji to read it later on. It was, however, mentioned that if Devkaranji was very eager to read it, there would be no objection to his reading in the presence of Lallujiswāmi, if he firmly decided not to overlook the benevolence of the Saint till the end of life.

Lallujiswāmi used to go to woods alone and study Ātmasiddhishāstra. In this connection he has mentioned, “My soul was overjoyed to read it and recite some of its stanzas. I felt that there is unique significance in its every line. Regular study of Ātmasiddhishāstra and its contemplation led to internal pleasure. Ātmasiddhi stayed in my mind while talking to anyone or while undertaking any other activity. I always remembered the serene face of Graceful Lord (Shrimad) or the delightful stanzas of Ātmasiddhi. I liked nothing else. Everything else remained insignificant. Only the importance of true Guru and his state stayed in my soul.”

Lallujiswāmi passed the monsoon of 1897 at Khedā. During that time Shrimad sent to him ‘Moksha Mārg Prakāshak’ for studying. One of its chapters relates to criticism of Sthānakwāsi sect. Devkaranji did not like it and had stopped reading the same. Thereupon Shrimad wrote that it was not worth hesitating in reading the book on any ground; one should give up looking for faults and adopt good points from any source. Devkaranji had realized that truth when he finished the reading.

During the monsoon of 1898 Shrimad went again to Charottar on a retreat. That time Lallujiswāmi was at Vaso and Devkaranji at Khedā. During August-September Shrimad went to Kāvithā and then to Vaso via Nadiād. He asked Lallujiswāmi, “Muni, how long would you like me to stay here?” Till then, Lallujiswāmi did not have any occasion



to remain in his contact for more than six days except at Bombay. With the intention to remain in longer contact he said, “It would be good if you stay here for a month.”

As Devkarānji came to know about the arrival of Shrimad at Vaso, he became keen to contact him. As such, he sent letters and messages to Shrimad to come to Khedā. Under the advice of Ambālālbhāi, Lallujiswāmi wrote to Devkarānji that if he requested for Shrimad’s contact after the monsoon, it would be beneficial to all. As the letter was received accordingly, Shrimad asked Lallujiswāmi, “Who had written to Devkarānji?” Without disclosing the name of Ambālālbhāi, Lallujiswāmi replied, “I had written the letter.” Shrimad said, “All this is done by Ambālāl, not by you.”

When Lallujiswāmi had to go for alms, he used to say to the people that a highly learned man had arrived from Bombay; it would therefore be beneficial, if they attended his sermons. Hence many people used to come to Shrimad and take advantage of his enlightened talks. Thereupon he told Lallujiswāmi, “You and other monks should not come when other people are there.” Lallujiswāmi repented that he had requested for having the benefit of contact for a month and the obstruction arose in the matter. His thirst for contact could not be contained, because the monks could get the benefit of Shrimad’s talks only when he went out.

Once while Shrimad was talking to the monks near a stepped-well, he asked Chaturlālji, “What did you do since you were initiated?” Chaturlālji replied, “In the morning we get tea in alms, then get snuff and smell it. At the time of lunch we get food in alms and after taking it we have the afternoon nap. In the evening we perform Pratikraman (atonement ritual) and sleep at night.”

Shrimad (Amusingly): “Do you think that getting tea and snuff in alms and sleeping after taking food amount to knowledge, perception and conduct?” Then he gave instructions for remaining awakened and advised Lallujiswāmi, “Please see that the monks do not indulge in indolence; they should spend their time in reading, self-study and meditation. All of you need to take only one meal a day, should not get tea and snuff unnecessarily and need to undertake the study of Sanskrit language.”

Muni Mohanlālji: Lallujiswāmi and Devkarānji have grown old, how can they study?

Shrimad: Study to the extent possible; that can be done. Queen Victoria is old and yet she studies other languages.

Mohanlālji once asked Shrimad: How should I observe meditation?

Shrimad: When Lalluji undertakes devotional prayers, you should listen to the same while staying in Kāusagga (staying beyond physical and mental aspects) and contemplate about their meanings.

Shrimad asked Lallujiswāmi to point out the following, when a liberation-seeker asked for means of Self-realization.

Give up seven major addictions.

Give up taking green vegetables.

Give up the articles growing underground.

Give up the articles, which are forbidden.

Give up eating after sunset.

Turn rosary five times a day.

Chant ‘Sahajātma Swaroop Paramguru’ (The supreme Guide abides at ease within the Self).

Recite and contemplate over Kshamāpanā (Atonement) and 20 lyrics (Bhakti Rahasya) every day.

Resort to wholesome contacts and true scriptures.

Some observations of Shrimad in his diary were useful to Lallujiswāmi. As such, Shrimad gave the diary for copying out that portion. While copying it Lallujiswāmi noticed some other portion that could be useful. So he copied that too thinking that he would seek Shrimad’s permission in the morning, since monks are not supposed to go out at night. In the morning as he went to Shrimad, he presented the parts suggested by Shrimad for copying as well as those that he had copied on his own and said, ‘At night I could not come here to seek your permission. Since the period of one month is to come to the end, I thought that I may not get the time later. As such, I have copied a few portions without your permission.’

On hearing it Shrimad took over the diary as well as the copies and did not give anything to Lallujiswāmi. The latter repented that he had copied without permission and told it to Ambālālbhāi. He also reproached Lallujiswāmi for copying without permission. Lallujiswāmi then asked him to obtain Shrimad's permission for the copies of the authorized portion. Thereupon Shrimad asked Ambālālbhāi to make fair copies of some parts of the diary and hand them over to Lallujiswāmi. That covered the earlier authorized portion as well as some other parts. Lallujiswāmi was instructed to deeply ponder over that. The latter had actually been thirsting for it and was gratified to get the material.

On the last day Shrimad gave instructions to Lallujiswāmi for an hour and turned his approach from sect to Self. He stopped talking after the objective reached the bottom of Lallujiswāmi's heart.

When one month was over, Shrimad said, "Are you happy; we have stayed here for one month as desired by you." Lallujiswāmi thought that it could have been better, if he had asked for longer time. Then with a view to awakening the monks Shrimad said: "Oh monks, you are at present indulging in indolence in the presence of the enlightened, but you would repent for that when he is not available. It would not be possible to come across the enlightened being even while traveling thousand miles."

From Vaso Shrimad went to Uttarsandā. After staying there for one month he went to Khedā and gave the benefit of contact to Devkaranji and other monks for 23 days. Devkaranji has described the benefit that he got in a letter addressed to Lallujiswāmi in which he had written as under.

"The illusion pertaining to wrong guru disappeared by the instructions relating to the chapter 32 of Uttarādhyayan and I became fully convinced of the true Guru. That has now been firmly established in the mind. It was a thrilling experience. The conviction has reached the bottom of heart and it has been decided to remain faithful to him. What you had said has come true. The fruit was ripened, its juice has been tasted, and tranquility has been gained. It would now be possible to remain true to him. Liberation seems visible in remaining at the service of true Guru. The Graceful Lord has extended full favor.

"Here, aside from the time for taking food, we are spending the entire time at the service of Guru and that is right. The same sentence turning out of his mouth seems a new one. His main instructions relate to thinning of the body, figuring out its essence, and pass away leaving the skeleton behind. He says, 'Find out the defiling thief dwelling within, burn it, perform its funeral ritual and attain rest in peace; be free; rest within; and experience the bliss. Do that immediately.' While listening to the enlightened Guru, if one adopts and resorts to even a word with total devotion, that itself is liberation; it points towards liberation."

At the end of monsoon all the seven monks got together at Nadiād. For about six weeks they used to take little food and sleep, and pass most of the time in reading, contemplation, meditation, devotion etc. They recalled the teaching of Shrimad at Vaso and Khedā, and exchanged with one another what they had learnt.

Lallujiswāmi and two other monks were thinking to move from Nadiād to Khambhāt, while Devkaranji and others had planned to go to Ahmedabad. However, on hearing that Shrimad had been on a retreat to Idar, Lallujiswāmi canceled the idea of going to Khambhāt and proceeded towards Idar. He was repenting that he could not fully avail of the benefit of Shrimad's contact at Vaso. Thereupon Devkaranji said, "We also want to get the benefit of his teaching. As you want to attain the well being, so do we." So saying he also proceeded towards Idar despite the indifferent health.

Lallujiswāmi, Mohanlālji and Narsirakh moved fast and reached Idar. Then Lallujiswāmi went towards the dispensary of Dr. Prānjivan Mehta to look for Shrimad. On seeing him Shrimad asked Thākārshi, who had been at his service, to take the monk directly to woodland. Thereafter Shrimad followed them. Then taking the Muni under a

mango tree, Shrimad learnt from him that three monks had arrived and other four were following. Thereupon he said with a slight anger: “Why are you pursuing us? What do you want now? We have already explained to you what needed to be explained. You should better leave tomorrow. We are informing Devkarani not to come here and to go elsewhere. We are living here in secrecy; we do not want to come in contact with anyone; we stay unrecognized. Do not come to Dr. Mehta’s place for alms, get it from other places, and leave tomorrow.”

Lallujiswami: We will leave as directed, but Mohanlalji and Narsirakh have not been able to see you here. Therefore if you permit, we might leave one day later.

Shrimad: Okay, do that way.

The next day in the morning the monks went under the same mango tree and waited for Shrimad. He was coming while chanting aloud the following stanzas of Dravyasangrah (Compilation of basic substances) and continued to chant the same after sitting.

Mā Munjzāh Mā Rajjāh, Mā Doossah, Itthanittha Atthesu  
Thiramichchahi Jai Chittam, Vichittajānappasiddhie.

(If you want to concentrate the mind in absolute meditation, avert delusion, craving and aversion towards the desirable or undesirable objects.)

Jam Kinchivi Chintato, Nirihavitti Have Jādā Sāhoo  
Laddhoonay Eyattam, Tādāhu Tam Tassa Nichchayam Jzānam

(While contemplating about any subject, when one stays absorbed and devoid of any desire, that is called absolute meditation.)

Mā Chitthah Mā Jampah, Mā Chintah Kimvi Jen Hoi Thiro  
Appā Appammi Rao, Inamev Param Have Jzānam

(If you want to remain steady, do not undertake physical activity, do not speak, and do not think; the superb meditation arises, when soul stays within the Self.)

His chanting continued for half an hour with utmost concentration. Then restraining his mental, verbal and physical faculties he stayed absorbed in meditation for half an hour. After finishing the meditation, he said ‘Think over.’ and left. The monks thought that he might have gone for urination, but since he did not come back, they returned to Upāshray. Thākārshi came there after they finished the meals etc. They asked him about the letter to be written to Devkarani. He replied that the letter had been written, but not mailed.

By that evening Devkarani and others arrived. Shrimad then directed them to go with Thākārshi to the Shwetāmbar and Digambar temples on the hill. That was the first time the monks bowed to the idols of omniscient Lords. The superb mode, which arose by bowing to the idols on the hill as per Shrimad’s directive, was beyond words. Thākārshi showed them the places as suggested by Shrimad. There are the relics and memoirs of Digambar monks on one cliff, and nearby are the cemetery, ponds and caves, which were also shown to the monks.

On the third day the monks were asked to go to the same mango tree. Accordingly they were waiting there till Shrimad arrived. It was winter and Devkarani’s frail body was shivering. Laxmichandji therefore put a cloth over it. On seeing that Shrimad said, “Are you feeling cold? Do you want to get rid of it?” So saying he started walking and the monks followed him. Passing through thorns and pebbles, spider webs and sharp stones, he came to a high slab and sat upon it with his face towards East; the monks sat in front of him.

Idar Library had been locked since long on account of the ownership dispute between Shwetāmbar and Digambar. Shrimad got the opportunity to see it by recommendation of king of Idar. He had brought from there a manuscript copy of Bruhad Dravyasangrah (Greater compilation of the basic substances) and started reading it. While half of it was finished, Devkarani said, “Why do we now need to go to the town?”

Shrimad: Who asks you to go there?

Devkaranji: Where is the alternative? Monks also have the stomach.

Shrimad: The stomach exists to a monk for people's well being. Had there been no stomach, no monk would go to the populace. They would stay in a cave and would move in the forest with total detachment. In that case they could not be helpful to the people. The stomach has therefore been given for the well being of populace.

While talking about meditation he said, "An ascetic visualizes what he contemplates during the meditation. If he contemplates of soul being a huge buffalo with the tail as large as this slab, the ascetic would visualize the soul of that type. But that is not soul; what knows it, is soul."

Once while all the monks were sitting in front of Shrimad under the mango tree, Mohanlalji said: "I take more time in tying Muhapatti after the meal and my Guru gives me penalty for that." On hearing that Shrimad asked all of them to remove Muhapatti and asked them not to tie the same within 40 miles of Idar. If anyone inquired about it, they were advised to satisfy him with peaceful explanation.

On the last day all the seven monks were waiting for Shrimad under the same mango tree, which was considered by them as the desire-yielding tree of the three worlds. Meanwhile Shrimad came and started leading all of them over a rough track strewn with thorns etc. He was moving fast. Thereupon the old monk Velshirakh thought whether Shrimad was going to leave someone behind. It was a hard track, yet Shrimad was moving ahead of all, while others were trailing behind.

Shrimad reached earlier and took the seat on a wide slab of stone. The monks also went there and sat after showing their reverence. Then he said, "There is a tiger nearby, but do not feel scared. This is Siddhasheelā (abode of the liberated) and one, who is sitting on it, is Siddha (the liberated one). So saying he asked: "Since we are seated at this height, can a person at the foot see us?"

Lallujiswāmi: "No, he cannot see us."

Shrimad: "Similarly a person belonging to a lower stage cannot accurately make out the state of the enlightened belonging to a higher stage. If, however, one becomes worthy and reaches the higher stage, he can make it out. Since we are at the top of the hill, we can see the whole town and other far off places, while the person at the foot can see only the area roundabout him. The enlightened being therefore suggests to the person below that if he comes up a little and sees, he can make out better."

Then he told the monks, "Assume the lotus posture like that of an omniscient Lord, listen to the stanzas of Dravyasangrah and try to make out their meanings." Accordingly all the monks assumed that posture and he started reciting the stanzas so excellently that the whole hill was reverberating. He recited the stanzas one after another while explaining the meaning and conveying its essence. He thus finished the whole Dravyasangrah; till then the monks stayed steadfast in the lotus posture.

Devkaranji felt very excited on that occasion and delightfully spoke out, "Of all the contacts with the great Guru so far, this was the superb. As the people fix a metal pitcher at the top of temple, so this occasion has become superbly beneficial. The explanation has occurred of the highest order."

Then Shrimad made a reference to Āchārya Gunbhadrā, the author of Ātmānushāsan (Order of Soul) and said, "In the later part of the book the author has blossomed forth in wonderful enlightenment. That vividly explains the nature of soul" so saying he read it.

Under the same mango tree the Graceful Lord (Shrimad) once said, "Dear monks, the tendency of living beings may fall even from a high level. Due to devotion and detachment, the tendency and the state of Ambālāl had earlier been of a level that manifested various accomplishments. If we might have talked for three or four hours and asked him to bring it in writing the next day or the third day, he could bring it ad verbatim. His tendency has now been slack on account of indolence, greed etc. We knew 12 months before that this fault was going to arise."

Lallujiswāmi was sad to hear it and asked, “Would it remain as it is now?”

Shrimad: “Muni, do not worry. A leaf floating in a river may stop at a place by virtue of coming across a web, but would resume the journey by getting freed from the same and reach the ocean. Similarly the indolence of Ambālāl would be overcome by our teaching and he will attain a higher state.”

Thereafter Lallujiswāmi moved round about Idar for two and a half month and then went to Kherālu. Later on he went to Nadiād and passed the monsoon of 1899 there.

7

Since passing the 1893 monsoon at Bombay Lallujiswāmi’s contact and correspondence with Shrimad had gone up. The rise of his devotion for the true Guide could not remain concealed. His condition was comparable to that of a devotee described by Yashovijayaji in the adoration song for Lord Sumatināth.

‘Sajjanshun Je Pritadiji, Chhāni Te Na Rakhāy; Parimal Kasturi Tanoji, Mahimānhe Malkāy.  
Dhānki Ikshu Parālshunji, Na Rahe Lahi Vistār, Vāchak Yash Kahe Prabhutanoji, Tim Muj Prem-prakār;  
Sobhāgi Jinshun Lāgyo Avihad Rang.

(Love for the saint cannot remain concealed; the flavor of camphor is going to spread all over; even if sugar cane is covered by grass, it is going to grow. Upadhyāy Yashovijayaji states, ‘My love for the Lord is of that type, I am indelibly tinted by love for the omniscient Lord.)

His correspondence with Shrimad had become controversial in the monastic order since 1894. During the summer of that year Shrimad had therefore addressed him as under.

“The scriptural tenets have forbidden the monks to enter into correspondence, because that would lead to public contact, provide increasing grounds for affection or disaffection, may result in contact with females, may lead to relaxation in observance of restraints, and so on. There are, however, exceptions. It seems that the scriptural texts do not forbid it when the enlightened being stays away and it is hard to remain in his contact without correspondence. That would, of course, be subject to the stipulation that there should be no motive other than spiritual well being, and that it is undertaken with the permission of an enlightened being or of a liberation-seeker. Corresponding is thus forbidden, where it is likely to endanger spiritual well being; but it needs to be considered how would the scriptural texts forbid the same, when the well being is at stake in absence of corresponding?

“In view of such consideration corresponding etc. would be permissible to the scriptural texts for the sake of knowledge, conviction, conduct etc. That can be resorted to by a deserving person at an appropriate time with the permission of a great man exclusively for the sake of spiritual well being, and that too on a solid ground. Regularly corresponding for an ordinary purpose is generally not permissible. It can, however, be admissible to regularly correspond with an enlightened person with his permission...

“If you have taken vow to forsake every worldly aspect, the concerned monk should not have separately administered the vow of not corresponding, but that is not necessarily objectionable. Had that vow been altered by the words of an enlightened being, there would have been no problem. The problem here arises, because the alteration has been made on an ordinary ground. This is not the occasion to define the nature of fundamental vows; we are considering here the traditional aspect. That also should not be transgressed willfully; that much should be firmly kept in mind for the time being. When the vows come in the way of rise of attributes, they can be slightly altered under the advice of an enlightened person or under the advice of a liberation-seeker, but thereafter they should be reinstated in the original form. It is not worth creating misgivings among the common people without substantial grounds....

“It has of course not been appropriate in making the issue out of your letter to Ambālāl. If, however, they ask you for formal repentance, better abide by it. Simultaneously it is worth pointing out to them with purity at heart that

they should not come in the way of someone asking for the enlightenment exclusively for the sake of spiritual well being.”

By about that time Shrimad had addressed a letter to Ambälälhbhai covering the same subject. Therein it was mentioned, “It is always better to bear; otherwise that would lead to unnecessary problems. ... Even if they let go the matter without formal repentance, Lalluji needs to keep in mind that he should not have done so. If there is a lay writer to whom a letter can be dictated in the presence of someone like Devkaranji, it is admissible to the sect; the people would not mostly raise objection thereto. If, however, any objection is apprehended, it is worth to observe patience for the time being. The objective of avoiding clash among the people should not be lost sight of.”

After Lallujiswami had completed the monsoon of 1895 at Surat, the chief of that sect had written a letter from Mälwä asking him to go to Khambhät in 1896. Accordingly Lallujiswami had passed the monsoon of that year in Khambhät. During that period Shrimad had come from Rälaj and stayed at Khambhät for a week. That time Lallujiswami and those five monks used to go to him. That was being seriously debated by the people and other monks. The matter had also reached the chief monk in a magnified form. During 1897 twenty monks had therefore assembled in Khambhat for deliberating the same. In that connection Ambälälhbhai had briefly written to Shrimad as under.

“Twenty monks have assembled here at the instance of Bhänjirakh. Munishri Lalluji and other five monks have been following your guidance. That has led to acute criticism from others. The liberation-seekers here act as per your advice, but the critics have been indulging in limitless malice. Even if one mildly points to the right code for monks, they take it in the wrong sense ... and propound inappropriately. The monks and other liberation-seekers have been maintaining equanimity and do not say anything. Even if we try to say something, the response is always wrong. What can be done under these circumstances? My Lord, you are our only resort!

“From among the monks, who are on the right path, they call one by one and exert undue pressure upon them. They try to move them from that path; they ridicule them in different ways in the presence of other people. Those six monks have still been observing equanimity. Muni Devkaranji is used to speak out, yet he has been controlling himself. Those on the other side are very rigid in their approach. If they suddenly excommunicate these six monks, how should they respond? In case, they do not excommunicate, but press them one by one to stay on their side, what would be the resort for the monks? This situation has made some truth-seekers very firm. They feel that the sectarian contact is wrong, but if they have to continue in that contact, what should they do? They are seeking guidance in the matter.

“It has not been possible to write in this letter at length. Though we have been staying without any sense of disaffection, the heat of the fire from the other side does not fail to have its impact; still we are trying to cool it down. Let bliss prevail in the world by favor of your grace. In spite of our best efforts the mind gets perturbed on account of the unwholesome environment. They may not allow the monks to budge from their clutches. They generally avoid talking to us. ... I am not capable to remain firm and happen to speak out; but they ridicule whatever truth we try to convey and that again leads to compassion.”

On account of Shrimad’s advice to stay in peace and unity, Lallujiswami was holding humility and gentleness in spite of all these hardships and had remained obedient to the chief monk. He used to spend most of the time in Self-study etc. That did not fail to have the positive impact upon others. The people could make out his greatness by virtue of his peaceful impressive personality, devotion, detachment etc. Moreover, the discourses of Devkaranji could change the minds of many critics.

By the end of 1897 Lallujiswami wrote a letter to Shrimad in which he mentioned, “Lord, from Khambhät Muni Chhaganji has handed over a letter to Ambälälhbhai with the instructions to read it to me and other monks. He has written that he is feeling sad at our not going to Ahmedabad. ... Lord, while thinking over the matter we made out that we have no intention to avoid Ahmedabad. Moreover since the monk on our side feels sad and insists upon our going there, we may better go with your permission. We have accordingly written to Ahmedabad and Khambhät.”

In reply Shrimad wrote, “Moving towards Ahmedabad and staying there need not cause the feeling of sadness or gloominess and should not perturb the mind. While thinking over it from the long-range benefit, however, it occurs to us that it is not worth staying there at present. ... At the time of next contact tell them to point out if they have

noticed any laxity in observing the monastic life, so that necessary action can be taken to avoid the same. If that is not the case, it is better to remain soul-oriented than being guided by the people, who speak indiscriminately on account of wrong approach.... You may perhaps be of the opinion that the people, who talk to the extent of improbability, would see the truth and that would avoid hurting the faith. That can be a good idea.... The better way is to bear the evil without being perturbed and to go to that place while moving in due course. That may result in wiping out the popular misgiving. That is worth doing. Getting influenced by the words of those, who are afflicted with craving and aversion, or to act for preserving self-respect or to treat it as a means for correcting the misgiving of the people (though actually resorted to on account of the inability to maintain equanimity) would not be beneficial to soul.”

In early 1898 Lallujiswāmi wrote, “We came in contact with Muni Bhānjiswāmi at Vaso and had talks in quiet and tranquil mode. He has said that we may peacefully move about in this area and we also said that we are not at present planning to go to Ahmedabad. After such tranquil talks he has gone to Khedā...”

During the summer of 1899 Lallujiswāmi wrote, “It is understood that Muni Chhaganji may pass the ensuing monsoon in Khambhāt. If, however, Muni Devkaranji comes on this side from Kutch, some adjustment would be made in the said program, if necessary. That would not entail any adverse situation.... The letter from Bhānjirakh is expected today.” Thereafter Lallujiswāmi had spent the monsoon period at Nadiād and Devkaranji at Vaso.

After the monsoon of 1899 Lallujiswāmi and other monks were excommunicated. It, however, seems from the above extracts that neither had there been total breakdown between the two sides, nor had there been disaffection among them. Though the excommunication resulted in dividing the sect in two equal parts, no dispute was raised by Lallujiswāmi about the sacred texts, books etc. That generosity and absence of desire for anything had wholesome impact on all the monks. Though the situation was rife for rise of defilement, the guidance of Shrimad and obedience of Lallujiswāmi and others led to the peaceful separation. They then got busy with spiritual development, as if nothing had happened.

This has been depicted by Ambālālbhāi in a nice letter. He writes, “Instead of adopting parochial attitude at the time of such worldly environment, the magnanimous monks stay delighted and think of the spiritual benefit emerging on the following lines.

‘We would be able to avoid unwholesome contact. After renouncing the belonging of all worldly aspects there had been some entanglement relating to the sect. That has now gone by the grace of true Guru. Oh soul, your sect, your clan, your religious order has now been expanded to the entire universe. You have now wide scope for spiritual development by resorting to detachment and absence of belonging, while observing equanimity and fraternity for six philosophical viewpoints.’

“Restrictions pertaining to area, time, matter or mode do not come in the way of those, whose tendencies turn inward.... The pure water, as it goes in the sea, does not like to remain in salty state. It turns into vapor by solar heat, takes the form of cloud and rains over the world as ambrosial water. Similarly you, the great monks, have recognized the truth in the form of true nature of soul and hence are like pure water. As such, giving up the sense of belonging for the sect, creed etc. you have been resorting to detachment for making the universe ambrosial!

“So long as one stays in the wrong mode, he is treated by the enlightened as stuck with wrong perception and sectarian approach: after gaining the right perception he still belongs to a particular creed, community, clan, group and so on; even at the thirteenth or fourteenth stage of spiritual elevation one belongs to the group of embodied beings. He feels gratified when his pure, unadulterated, everlasting blissful, liberated state arises; then he gets apart from everything; he gets purified. ...”

In another letter also he presents the encouraging and inspirational words. “Those, who think at length, have come to the conclusion that one gets respect, disrespect etc. as per destruction cum pacification of Karma ...or by rise of the concerned Karma. In other words, one gains, worshipfulness, reverence etc. as the consequence of previous Karma acquired by resorting to pure conduct, austerities, scriptural knowledge, contemplation, detachment etc. Similarly he gets disquiet, hunger, thirst, insult, disrespect etc. as the consequence of previous unwholesome Karma. One cannot change anything in that respect. Thus knowing that every situation results from the wholesome or unwholesome Karma, the thinking people observe equanimity in respect or disrespect etc. and stay in the ecstatic state....

Velshibhāi has left from here yesterday in order to pass the Paryushan days at the service of Munishri.”

Shrimad had asked the liberation-seekers to remain in touch with the monks from time to time. As such, they used to go to the monks whenever convenient and also took the advantage by correspondence.

8

After passing the monsoon of 1899 at Nadiād, Lallujiswāmi and the monks with him went to Viramgām. Devkaranji also had been there. All those six monks were passing their time in devotion, contemplation, spiritual talks etc. In due course Mohanlālji and others went to Sānand. That very night Shrimad came to Viramgām and saw the monks in Upāshray. All of them first recited the adoration songs of Ānandghanji and Devchandji. Thereafter Shrimad explained the adoration song starting with ‘Veerjine Charane Lāgun, Veerpanun Te Māngun Re’ (While falling at the feet of Lord Mahāveer I am seeking the prowess). The next morning Shrimad met them again. Thereafter Shrimad went to Vavāniā, while Lallujiswāmi and other monks proceeded towards Ahmedabad.

After a few days Shrimad came back to Ahmedabad and stayed at the building of Premābhāi Sheth. While going to Rājpur temple he informed Lallujiswāmi and others to reach there. At the temple he first sang the adoration song for Lord Padmaprabhswāmi and then going to the white marble idol by the side of the main idol of Lord Pārshwanāth, he said, ‘Devkaranji, see, look at the soul.’ Thereupon Lallujiswāmi and others came near the idol. Shrimad then said, “Digambar monks are unclad and hence their idols are kept unclad; Shwetāambar monks put on white cloth and hence their idols are decorated with crown etc.’ Then coming out of the temple he said, “Monks, there is no end to the disturbance if you look outside; therefore keep the eyes inward.”

From Ahmedabad Shrimad went to Idar and a few days after that Lallujiswāmi and others went to Narodā. They received a letter from Shrimad that he would be coming to Narodā. Some liberation-seekers from Ahmedabad also had been there. On his arrival Shrimad sent a message to the monks to meet at a certain place of retreat at noon. Accordingly while the monks arrived at the border of Narodā, Shrimad and others were waiting for them.

The ground had been hot with the heat of summer. Noticing, however, that the monks might be feeling heat at their bare feet, Shrimad took off his footwear and started moving steadily towards the banyan tree. The monks were walking fast in order to get shelter under the tree, but Shrimad was walking patiently without caring for heat. The people were talking that he was truly the enlightened person as Devkaranji used to say.

Shrimad took the seat under the banyan tree; then six monks bowed to him and sat in front of him. They saw that Shrimad’s feet had been red with heat, but he did not even move his hand over them. Then looking at Devkaranji he said, “Now we want to stay connectionless; we do not like to come in contact with anyone; the soul wants to stay entirely unconnected.”

Devkaranji: What would happen to the infinite compassion of the enlightened?

Shrimad: That also has to be ultimately given up. By the way, what is the reason for Sthānakwāsi people disturbing you?

Devkaranji: They cannot bear your picture that we keep with us.

Shrimad: For that very reason we did not ask you to keep our picture with you. Whatever the enlightened being says is always uncontroversial. You have willfully kept our picture; now give it up. We will send you the Digambar book ‘Yogpradeep’; ponder over it repeatedly.

Lallujiswāmi passed the monsoon of 1900 in goldsmith inn at Sojitrā. Though he had retained Sthānakwāsi garb after leaving that fold, yet for monsoons he wanted to stay at places where he would not come across the people of that sect. At Sojitrā he happened to meet a Digambar Bhattachārya.

By the time the monsoon was over, Lallujiswāmi and others came to know that Shrimad had come to Ahmedabad.



As such, all the monks proceeded towards that place. On the way Lallujiswāmi had fever, hence the articles of his use were taken over by Mohanlālji. Still Lallujiswāmi had a bag on his hand and Mohanlālji wished that the same should be carried by Narasirakh. Since that was not done, Mohanlālji talked about it to Devkaranji after reaching Ahmedabad. Thereupon Devkaranji rebuked Narasirakh. Another monk, however, took the side of Narasirakh and Devkaranji's instructions remained ignored.

No one had told Shrimad about the matter; yet when all the monks went to Āgakhān place to see Shrimad, he incidentally said, 'Monks, this soul has borne the load of spouses, children etc. but has not undertaken devotion of saints or religious persons without indolence.' So saying he asked Laxmichandji to carry the 'Jnānānav' volume during the itinerary till Devkaranji finished its reading. Then he asked Devkaranji to read that book and offered it in alms to him. Similarly he offered 'Kārtikeyānuprekshā' to Lallujiswāmi and asked him to read it thoroughly. Simultaneously he asked Mohanlālji to carry the same.

Shrimad said to Lallujiswāmi, "The author of Kārtikeyānuprekshā was celibate. His level of detachment truly corresponded to what he has narrated in the book. Contemplate over it at length at the place of retreat." Then he said to Devkaranji, "You should also read that book. After finishing the books given to both of you, please exchange and ponder over them."

Devkaranji: How has your body become so frail?

Shrimad: We have been against the body.

On the eve of going to Surendranagar, Shrimad went to Bhāvsār place, where the monks were staying for the time being. Informing them about his plan to go to Surendranagar, he said to Lallujiswāmi with a tone of reproach, "You have been after us; you pursue us wherever we go; you do not leave us alone." Thereupon Lallujiswāmi thought that henceforth he would go to Shrimad when called for; so long as he does not call for, he would continue to stay in devotion.

The next day Shrimad called for Lallujiswāmi and Devkaranji at Āgakhān place and said, "Now we have no inclination but for detachment; do not conceive of any distinction between us and the detached Lords." Lallujiswāmi and Devkaranji had that type of faith in Shrimad. They were highly delighted to hear it from his mouth. They were extremely happy to note that Shrimad had emptied his heart to them before leaving.

Shrimad left Ahmedabad for Surendranagar. After staying there for some time he went to Rajkot. There he left his body on Tuesday, April 9 1901. The news of his passing away was conveyed to Lallujiswāmi through Zaverchand Bhagvāndās of Kāvithā. The previous day Lallujiswāmi had fasted and had spent the night in woods. When he came back in the morning for terminating the fast, Zaverchand and his brother were talking about giving the news to Lallujiswāmi after termination of the fast. Thereupon he inquired about it and he was informed about Shrimad's passing away. On hearing that Lallujiswāmi went back to woods and spent the whole day alone in devotion, Kāusagga etc. without even taking water. He thus spent the day with pangs of separation in woods within the hot weather of April. Thereafter he went to Vaso.

Now the contact of Ambālālbhāi was the only source of consolation and encouragement. Lallujiswāmi and other monks had stayed at Vaso during the monsoon of 1901. The following letter written by Ambālālbhāi that time inviting them to Khambhāt is worth pondering over.

AUM

"Obeisance to the highly detached saints, who have renounced the worldly life.

"Let our devotional obeisance be at the feet of the detached monks. You have given up the sense of belonging for body by the grace of uniquely detached, enlightened souls. As such, you have been staying self-delighted and are imbibed with innate compassion towards the deserving people with a view to their spiritual uplift. It is my earnest desire to know that you are in peace.

"Your words have been imbibed with sense of detachment by virtue of having listened to the ambrosial words of the

true Guru; your physique is imbibed with the said sense by virtue of devotion; your mind also is imbibed with that sense by continual remembrance thereof. Moreover, by virtue of knowing the nature of universe you stay within the Self. Let the attributes of such great sages always stay at our heart. It is my humble entreaty to you to come this side in order to elevate this miserable soul, which has been drifting in the worldly sea and is wandering in the forest of life and death. Quiet prevails here by the grace of unique saint (Shrimad), my devotional obeisance to him. Let the feet of that detached Guru always stay at our heart! Let us remember that great man and stay at the shelter of his feet forever!

“Let my repeated obeisance be to the soul-abiding great monks, whose tendency stays within and who are holding the deeply serene posture, as if they might have resolutely determined not to move within the four states of worldly existence. You have been imbibed with acute detachment; have been holding the sword of ‘forgive and forget’ for fighting against the realm of defilement so as to uproot the same, and you surrender at the feet of the enlightened while observing total silence. Repeated obeisance to those monks, who are equipped with the weapons of restraints like the brave men, who are illuminating the flame of spirituality, who are setting ablaze all sorts of wrong modes, who have controlled the sense organs, who firmly stay in the lotus posture with inner insight, and who remain delightfully absorbed within the consciousness.”

A press note prepared by Lallujiswāmi or Devkaranji or other monk, or by some liberation-seeker in their name, and published or proposed to be published in Mumbai Samāchār after passing away of Shrimad has been found from the collection of Lallujiswāmi. It seems that the concept of setting up an Āshram or other center had arisen among some devotees by the time of Shrimad’s departure. The press note given below seems to have been prepared in 1902 prior to Devkaranji’s passing away.

‘A request from the Jain monks for setting up Shrimad Rajchandra Jnānmandir’

To the editor of Mumbai Samāchār

Sir,

Munishri, Devkiranji and other monks have conceived of the following idea, which we request you to publish in your paper.

‘The path of detachment laid by Lord Mahāveer was divided in two parts of Shwetāmbar and Digambar sects in course of time after Lord’s Nirvān. There had been some differences in thinking, but the main reason for their going apart lay in their staying in different climes and different administrations. Both sects adopted changes in regulations in accordance with the conditions in which they were placed. Long after that, a situation arose in which the followers of Shwetāmbar and Digambar sects did not come across each other. Meanwhile there had been great thinkers in either of the sects, but they did not get the opportunity to think over the sectarian differences. They were loaded with the responsibility of undertaking the great task of rectifying the miserable position of the respective sect that had arisen by virtue of ignorance, and of putting the same on the right line. Take, for instance, the time of Āchārya Haribhadrāsuri. During the time of that great man the condition of Shwetāmbar sect was so much in disorder that he had to undertake to improve the same. He had to devote much time and energy in that direction. That task was so extensive that he could not spare time to discuss the differences between the two sects and to come to the decision for introducing the changes. As such, he resorted to the work of improving the condition of Shwetāmbar sect, which was highly beneficial. The same applies to Digambar thinkers. The different thinking pattern on both the sides thus continued to stay.

Now take the time of Hemchandrāchārya. For him also lay the task of improving the condition of his sect. Hence he could not undertake the work of coming to a joint decision with Digambar people. The same was applicable to other great thinkers. Minor differences and different viewpoints had grown to such a scale that it was very tough to remove the same even for the great Āchāryas, yet they did what they could. The time after Hemchandrāchārya was so much in disorder that it merely did the work of increasing the differences.

Thus the work of reconciling the differences between the two sects remained unattended. Since the administration is now stable, that part of difficulty has been reduced for great men, if they arise at present. On the other hand the minor differences had grown up and they had gone so deep that it was hard to uproot the same. The great man, who

recently passed away, was born to overcome such problems. It seemed that the advent of that sacred soul was symbolic of sunrise for Jainism. By studying the religious philosophies at depth he had brought out their essence. Neither Jainism nor Vedānt was his path. He stipulated the path that could make one aware of the detached state and could lead to the well being of soul. Though he had initially to face several accusations, the people were coming to know him as impartial advocate of pure Self, above all sorts of differences and different opinions. The people had started getting the conviction that he was the man to indicate the path of self-realization based on pure detachment. But alas! The rising sun is set; his present age span is over; the work of illuminating the path of detachment is held up!

We were also deeply involved in difference of opinions like others. Despite taking vows for renouncing the belongings physically, verbally and mentally, the undue insistence on sectarian beliefs was deeper amongst us than that which even a layman, unaware of the essence of religion, could have for his belongings. How could one hope for people's well being, when this could be the state of monks? In such a state of ignorance the above-said pure soul showed to us that the path of spiritual well being lies in absence of desire. That great man explained to us that we had been working against our own interest on account of the difference of opinions. We now feel that we were hurting ourselves by unduly holding sense of belonging for sect.

From the unique benefit that we gained from that great soul's contact, we felt sure that he was the man to illumine the path laid by Lord Mahāveer. Had his age span been longer, the minor differences would have been certainly put an end to. Not only that, the subtle differences between Shwetāmbar and Digambar could have been removed and the true path propounded by Lord Mahāveer could have been reinstated. All those expectations are now gone; it is hard to conceive how much the ignorance is to grow. At least the followers of the great man should set up a Jñān Mandir (Temple of Knowledge), where people can learn his teaching. It should be so planned that the behavior of its followers would be exemplary to the people at large."

The following extract from the letter number 708 of Shrimad's Vachanāmṛut would be helpful in understanding the thinking behind the above-mentioned press note.

"If the original path is to be reinstated, one needs to resort to all out renouncement; only in that case his teaching can be really helpful. ... If it is possible to come across such a person, many people could come to the right path. ... While looking around, no one of that stature comes to the notice; as such, the attention turns towards this writer.... It is possible that thousands of people can come to the right path through us and can attain a higher state of existence by resorting to that path, if we can totally renounce.... Such tendency may perhaps arise by virtue of the desire for reputable position that one gains by setting up religion. From the repeated introspection, however, it appears that there is hardly any scope for rising of such a tendency in the present state. Moreover, if there be any potentiality for the same, it is bound to disappear. The Self at the inner level is resolutely firm about not setting up the path without being worthy of it even if the life seems to be coming to the end.... I feel that my present state is appropriate to set up or refine the path based on Vedānt, but I am still not competent to set up one based on Jainism. Yet it is felt that there is fairly high level of competency."

In number 709 he writes as under.

"Let me recall the following means of spiritual uplift:

Pure nature of Self be explained everywhere according to the original path;

Everywhere it may come to the notice that it is not at all helpful to hold difference of opinions;

It should come to the notice that the religion lies in carrying out the commands of true Guide.

People may resort to the study of Dravyānuyog, the study of Self.

Monks may resort to higher level of renouncement and detachment.

Many people may ponder over Navtattva (Nine fundamentals), monastic code and laymen's code."

During the lifetime of Shrimad, Lallujiswāmi used to move at places like Nadiād, Ānand, Ahmedabad, Narodā etc. in order to see Shrimad and to remain in his contact; he also did not miss any opportunity to see him at the Rail stations, when he came to know of Shrimad's going to Bombay or Saurāshtra. Since that ground for movement no longer existed, and since he loved forest areas and other lonely places where he could better resort to spiritual pursuit, he moved towards south beyond Dharampur. He had taken with him only Mohanlālji, who would talk to the people coming to Upāshray or other resting place. Lallujiswāmi passed most of the time in woods and would come back at the time of taking food.

Once he went deep in the woods. Scores of aborigines turned out all of a sudden with arrows, bows etc. and surrounded him. As he could not make out why they stood surrounding him, he asked fearlessly why all of them had been there. One of them said, "You are the Government agent and have come here to recruit us. So we want to hold you." Thereupon Lallujiswāmi gave them the name of the trader where he had put up and said, "We are the monks; come with me, if you want to make sure. We come to the woods only for the sake of devotion. Today I happened to come this far; you need not be afraid of us, we are not Government agents." Those people were satisfied with that explanation and dispersed.

Thereafter while undertaking longer journeys they reached Karmālā in the South and passed the monsoon of 1902 there. Gujarati and Mārṇādī settlers in that area used to come in contact with them. Those people liked the way Lallujiswāmi used to talk about the religion without any partiality. Later on in Agās Āshram while talking about that region he used to say that the people there were zealous and devoted; had he stayed there longer, something like Agās Āshram could have been set up there.

Meanwhile Devkarānji and others were moving in Charotar area. He was to pass the monsoon of 1902 at Borsad, but a thorn pricked into his foot while he was at Bhādran. He got infection and that reached his foot-bone. As such, it was decided to pass the monsoon at Ahmedabad. The liberation-seekers arranged to send him there in a shoulder-hammock. There the local liberation-seekers remained at his service. He was required to undergo surgery. Since, however, he did not want to stay unconscious, the surgery had to be performed without anesthetics. The surgery had to be performed seven times, but he remained firm in avoiding anesthetics. Eventually he left the body at Ahmedabad during that monsoon. After his demise Chaturlālji, who was with him, was keen to go Lallujiswāmi and wrote to him to seek the permission. As the permission was granted, he proceeded towards Karmālā after the monsoon.

Laxmichandji and other monks had been with Devkarānji for monsoon at Ahmedabad. From Karmālā Lallujiswāmi had written the following letter of consolation to them.

"He (Devkarānji) had a strong inclination for self-realization, which he had gained from Shrimad's contact. The purified soul was living the life of the self-realized. Repeated obeisance to such a soul!

"The great men have termed peaceful bearing of pain as the topmost religion. True conduct lies in bearing the pain without perturbation of mind. Equanimity is the essence of enlightenment. The acute pain turns out to be a source of high degree of Nirjārā (eradication of Karma) for such enlightened persons. Muni Devkarānji has gained such Nirjārā by resorting to equanimity while bearing the pain at the time of embracing the death. Now you need to behave in a way that leads to unraveling and disentanglement.

"The contact of Devkarānji was helpful to other monks in observance of restraints; that helped in enhancing the sense of detachment and renouncement. On that very account we also feel sad at the loss. But we should now get off from that sadness; all of us have to depend upon the true Guru; that is our resort... Everything else is destructible and we have to forsake the same sooner or later... It is necessary to give up all sorts of inclinations except that of the soul... Maintain tendency within the soul while keeping in mind the external, internal and the supreme modes explained in the adoration song for Lord Sumatimnath... Gautamswāmi also had given up the attachment for Lord Mahāveer. Retain the tendency exclusively within the nature of true Guru.... Keep the Mantra in mind. It is not necessary to get confused on any account."

Devkarānji was inherently bold like a lion. As he received the call from 'Death' in the form of thorn-prick, he boldly accepted the same. The impact of his discourses was so strong and effective that the listener would not forget it for six months. Shrimad affectionately used to call him Devkirna.

While moving far away up to Karmälä in the South Lallujiswämi had maintained correspondence with Ambälälbhäi. The latter had conveyed a wish that Lallujiswämi should gain indestructible right perception, have attributes of Ächärya and become a source of resort. Lallujiswämi had replied that he had no intention to become Ächärya or to hold any other position; his only aspiration was to get unraveled and disentangled. In reply thereto Ambälälbhäi had written two letters, which are worth pondering over as can be seen from the following extracts.

“I am very pleased to learn about your aspiration to get unraveled and disentangled, but it is necessary for us to get in contact. Thereafter you may move the way you think fit. I would be glad and wish that you get disentangled. The liberation-seeking people, however, have nothing to depend upon. As such, I consider it appropriate to invite you here after the end of monsoon. The liberation-seeking males are indulging in indolence and there is no one to awaken them. The females have become particularly helpless on account of break with the sect; they have nothing to depend upon.

“Now let us think of ourselves. We feel compassionate for those, who have come in contact; otherwise there are endless living beings in the world. If we go on displaying pity for all of them and spend the life for that purpose, our well being, which lies in purifying knowledge, perception and character, will be left aside. We have not to think of what happens to the world. Our role is to hold compassion for everyone.

“You are not having any wholesome contact that can encourage your tendencies. While lonely moving in the hills do you hold the state, which you had at Idar? ... Earlier while staying in the wholesome contact it was noticed that such a state could spontaneously arise and all the aspects excepting the self-contemplation seemed extraneous, not our own. That used to happen by virtue of the unique contact, was the outcome of such a contact. If we confine ourselves in a cave, we may forcibly bring out such a state, but I think that it would be hard to retain it longer in absence of right contact. I do not mean not to go in retreat; surely go for that, but after extending the badly needed contact. Not only would that enable us to reach a higher state, but also to retain it longer. This I am writing as per my experience and understanding. You are capable to grasp what is virtuous; hence please let me know what you want to do.

“Based on my experience I am mentioning the means for gaining self-awareness. If there happens to be utterance of a poem, stanza or words, and if the mind stays engrossed therein, the body remains calm. In other words, absorption in verbal utterance simultaneously with mental concentration leads to physical steadiness, and that leads to self-contemplation. For that purpose it is necessary to have less contact, less possessions, restrained food-intake, disinclination etc.... Higher the absorption, the higher is the awareness. That results in reduction of Karma. Awareness is the primary requirement. There is absence thereof, and that makes it harder to reach the higher state. If we try to bring it by force, that does not last; it disappears. ... With vigilant contemplation it is possible to gain and augment that state with little or no effort.

“What does that awareness mean? The awareness denotes vigilant contemplation of any word, sentence, stanza or poem with a view to grasp its full implication. That should be carried out to an extent, where the mind stops feeling tired and becomes more cheerful as the implications become clearer; its enthusiasm continues to grow; it gets delighted and remains absorbed. How enjoyable would it be when mind, speech and body stay united and remain absorbed in contemplation? There is acute shortage of the vigilant awareness that leads to total absorption. The enlightened beings have therefore urged for remaining in wholesome contact. Such contact provides strength to those having lower capability for contemplation.

“In order to develop that capacity it is necessary to study logic, reasoning, grammar and scriptures. They become helpful in developing the contemplating capacity.

“We do not have attained the state for pursuing well being of the world; it is not even worth indulging in such hypocrisy. We have compassion for the whole world. So long, however, six fundamentals are not appropriately understood, it is not possible to establish or refute any viewpoint. The nature of those fundamentals can be

comprehended to the extent the thinking power and the purity of character arise.

“You may manifest such an accomplishment that you can innately stay within Self, and we can cross over by resorting to your shelter.”

During that monsoon Ambälālbhāi happened to go to Karmālā. Shwetāmbars, Digambars and Sthānakwāsis in that place had been gripped with conflict and tussle against one another for thirty years. Lallujiswāmi had helped in removing the same and setting up unity among them.

While moving in the South at the end of monsoon Lallujiswāmi stayed for some time at Ghornadi village. One woman as well as her daughter belonging to that village had become Sthānakwāsi nuns. She had passed the monsoon in the village along with other nuns, and had continued to stay there because of her illness. The nuns had written to the monks of their sect about her acute illness and had sought their advice for her undertaking fast unto death. Having reverence for the Khambhāt branch and knowing that Lallujiswāmi had been at the place, those monks had asked the nuns to act as per his advice.

On the very day the nuns received the advice, the illness of the nun reached the climax and she became unconscious. Thinking that she would not survive, the principal nun administered to her the vow of renouncing all the four types of food and drinks and by reciting the relevant Sutra she was put to fast unto death. Dying without such fast was considered disgraceful in that fold. However, as the night passed and it was time for dawn, the nun started regaining consciousness. In the morning she asked for water. The principal nun was nonplussed; how could she give water after administering the vow of renouncing all types of intake? With utter confusion in mind she went to the place where Lallujiswāmi had put up and told him everything. She also said what the monks of the sect had suggested, but ‘it was not possible to come here at night and in view of her impending death I have administered to her the vow of fast unto death. Now what to do? I am in a dilemma; please show the way out.’

Lallujiswāmi calmed her and went to the nuns’ Upāshray. All the nuns showed respect to him. Then he said to the sick nun, “There is no reason to feel perturbed. You can freely take the food or drink that you need.”

Nun: No sir, they have administered the vow to me; I cannot, however, do without water.

Lalluji: The vow administered to you without your seeking is ill conceived; that is not the true vow. If you think it sinful to break that vow, I am undertaking the sin over my head. Now don’t consider it objectionable to take pure food and water that you may feel inclined to have.

Everyone was amazed to hear that. The sick nun said, “I want to renounce all intakes except water. Please do something blissful at the time of my death.”

In view of her request for death in quietude Lallujiswāmi regularly used to go to the Upāshray and talk to her about the words of saintly beings. He used to give the instructions that she could make out. The listeners found those talks very tough, but no one dared to speak out under the ascetic force of the great man. Later, Lallujiswāmi used to describe that event in an interesting but detachment-oriented mode. His instructions to her were:

“Soul is different from the body; you are not the body, you are not afflicted by this disease, you are neither old nor young, neither a lay woman, nor a nun, neither a pupil nor the head. You are pure, enlightened, conscious soul. These are not your clothes, not your books, not your articles, not your settee; you are not the daughter, nor the chief. Even this body does not belong to you. Renounce everything. By resorting to contemplation and detachment one needs to be free from every aspect to which the soul is entangled. It is not worth getting attached to or having affection for anything in the entire universe. It is necessary to resort to objectivity forever. Try to see the soul while walking, sitting, rising, speaking, sleeping, getting up, in every condition. In absence of soul one cannot move, walk, speak, think or experience happiness or misery. We know everything in the presence of soul. As such, do not keep anything in the mind except the soul; do not hold sense of belonging for anything else, if there be any such sense, give it up.

“The soul has come alone and is going to leave alone. Neither can one take over another’s pain nor can he make one happy. Similarly no one can bear the consequences of our Karma; we have to bear the same. Why should we then

indulge in pleasure or lamentation? While resorting to equanimity, forbearance and patience and with faith in soul as laid by the enlightened, if we avail the operative Karma, we do not acquire new ones and those acquired earlier are stripped off. However much we may wish, the embodiment is not going to continue after the age span is over. In that case why indulge in hurting the soul by remaining in delusive attachment for the destructible embodiment? Whatever happens, do not keep the mind in any aspect other than soul. By keeping the mind elsewhere this soul has wandered in worldly life for infinitely long period. Now direct the inclination towards what has been heard from the saintly person, what he has said regarding the importance of soul and about Ātmasiddhi. Resort to the pure nature and maintain continual awareness. That is worth doing. If you do that much, your purpose will be served, you will attain the ecstatic death.”

That nun also had got the faith that whatever the great man said was true; that was worth resorting to and that constituted the path of liberation. In his absence also she used to ponder over his instructions and to abide by the same. She frequently used to say, “This is not my settee, these are not my clothes, this body is not mine. Nothing belongs to me; everything is to be left behind. The soul as realized and experienced by the enlightened is true; it is eternal, blissful and worth resorting to.” She survived for twenty-one days on water. Lallujiswāmi used to see her daily and nourished her spirit with right instructions of maintaining patience and forbearance. He also used to read to her the letter of Six Fundamentals, Ātmasiddhi, Apporva Avasar etc. and advised her to firmly remain at the shelter of saint and to retain the sense of Self. Later on, he had said on many occasions that she had died in quietude and was destined to a higher state of existence.

Since her fast unto death continued for twenty-one days, everyone in the village knew about it. Driven by animosity towards Jainism, one of them wrote to the Government that one woman was starved to death. Thereupon the District Collector had been there to inquire in the matter. The village people told him that it was the case of voluntarily giving up of food by the nun. Their religion stipulates for adopting such a vow at the time of impending death. Lallujiswāmi used to go to her for that very purposes and no force was exerted on her. Thus they courteously gave farewell to the Collector by satisfying his mind.

On the way back Lallujiswāmi proceeded towards Gujarat by the same route of hills and forests that he had traversed for going to South. This time also he encountered hardship similar to what he had experienced while going to South. Chaturlālji and Mohanlālji were with him. The former was moving ahead with the bowls for alms and other articles of use, and the remaining two were following him. The distance between the two had increased by the time they came near Kosambā. All of a sudden, two aborigines turned out. One of them pulled the shoulder of Chaturlālji from behind and felled him down. All the bowls that he had were broken down. Then one of the attackers got over Chaturlālji’s feet and the other on his chest. Thereupon Chaturlālji collected all his strength, threw them off his body and stood up. While he was then reproaching them while holding their hands, Mohanlālji arrived. As the attackers noticed that Lallujiswāmi also was following, they adopted the mild attitude and entreated to let them go. Meanwhile Lallujiswāmi arrived; he gave them the right advice and let them go.

While thus undergoing different types of experiences on the way the monks reached Narodā and passed the monsoon of 1903 there. During that period liberation-seekers from Ahmedabad and other places used to go there for getting in contact with the monks. After the end of monsoon the monks went on a pilgrimage to Rānakpur near Sādadi in Mārṇād. As one animus person came to know of their plan, he went to Sādadi and told the people that some Sthānakwāsi monks were to arrive there, but they should not be offered food, water etc. because they had diverted from the path. He convinced the people that giving help to those monks would involve Mithyātva (the wrong perception).

When the monks arrived at Rānakpur, they went to the temple for bowing and devotion and then went for alms. Not only did they fail to get any food in alms, they did not get even water. Some persons were taking bath with warm water. One monk asked for that water, but they declined to offer it. The next day also the monks had the same experience. Thereupon other monks thought to move from that place; Lallujiswāmi was, however, of firm opinion that the true mode of renouncement lay in facing the hardships that come over; to be frightened of the hardship or running away from that is cowardice. On the third day too they did not get even water. They had thus to observe three days’ fast without water.

By that time a Sangh (Group of religious people on a pilgrimage) from Khambhāt arrived at Rānakpur. Before taking food they thought of offering the same to some monk, if there be any. When they came to know that Lallujiswāmi and other monks were there, those people respectfully called the monks and devotionally offered food and water.

After completing the pilgrimage the monks moved from Mārṇād and came to Pālanpur. Pitāmbardās Mehta, the chief of Sthānakwāsi sect of that place, came to see them. While talking to them he learnt that the monks had been on a pilgrimage. He thus made out that they had changed the faith. Sthānakwāsis do not believe in worshipping the idols and do not go to temples. In order therefore to reproach the monks he said, “Monks, nuns, laymen and lay women are the only four abodes of pilgrimage; from where did you get the fifth? If the monks start moving this way, how can the lay people retain their faith? Where is the scope for monastic code, when you behave contrary to the words of Lords?” He thus said a lot out of excitement and irritation, but the monks remained silent.

At night Pitāmbardās thought, ‘Today I bitterly talked to the monks, but they did not utter a word and held forbearance. In scriptures it is said that Indra (Heavenly king) had praised the forbearance of Nami Rājarshi by pointing out that he had overcome anger as well as arrogance. Today those words became manifest to me. The monks showed evident forbearance. I indulged in terrific anger, showered bad words; but they remained unaffected. In the morning I should better beg their pardon.’ Accordingly he went to the monks early in the morning, devotionally bowed to them and begged their pardon.

From Pālanpur Lallujiswāmi and other monks went to Pālitānā and from there to Junāgadh to climb Mt. Gīrnār. The ascent was tough, yet several pilgrims were going up to the fifth Tunk (Summit). Lallujiswāmi was ahead of them and was encouraging them to climb up. Meanwhile he noticed a cave. It was said that an ascetic used to stay there earlier, but since then no one could pass the night in the cave. In spite of being forbidden, a monk once stayed there overnight; he was found in a bad state in the morning and he died. On hearing it Lallujiswāmi thought to stay there overnight; though forbidden by the liberation-seekers he stayed in the cave together with Mohanlālji. Others climbed down the hill and went to Junāgadh.

During the night both the monks started reciting devotional songs. Meanwhile there arose a thundering noise as if the rocks were rolling down. Thereupon the monks started reciting the songs aloud. After a while they heard thunders similar to the lightening strikes. The monks did not direct attention thereto and enthusiastically continued the devotion to Guru. Thereafter they passed some time in question-answers. Mohanlālji was asking the questions and Lallujiswāmi was replying. During the latter part of the night Lallujiswāmi spent the time in meditation, while Mohanlālji continued to chant the Mantra. In the morning they came out and inquired about the terrific sounds, but they did not get any clue. Thereafter they spent the second and third night also there, but did not come across any problem as in the first one.

After leaving Junāgadh Lallujiswāmi went to Dhandhukā and passed the monsoon of 1904 there. During that time Ambālālbhāi and other liberation-seekers from Viramgām, Ahmedabad and Vatāman had gone there to get in contact with him and stayed there for 15 days on the occasion of Paryushan Parva. Some of them were absorbed in devotion and its impact stayed with them till the end of their lives.

The leading persons of Bhāvsār community belonging to Sthānakwāsi sect of Dhandhukā once came to Lallujiswāmi and expressing their faith in him they asked, “Is it necessary to believe in idol? Is idol worship specified in the scriptures? We do not know about it, yet do not go to temples. We would abide by your advice.” Lallujiswāmi replied, “The scriptures specify the idols; the idol worship is beneficial and insisting on not going to temples needs to be given up. We also go to temple for devotion and bowing. You should better know about it at length during some wholesome contact.”

Accordingly the thirty Bhāvsār families changed their faith from Sthānakwāsi to Derāwāsi (Temple goers), but on account of the loss of right contact thereafter they reverted to the original faith. While changing the faith they should have gone for self-awakening. That was left out and what actually happened was similar to a person, who would move from one side to the other during the sleep, but does not wake up.

Dhārashibhāi, who was a student of Karma philosophy, had been to Dhandhukā for getting in contact with



Lallujiswāmi. Once he asked the latter to go upstairs. As both of them went up, Dhārashibhāi closed the door and reverently falling at Lallujiswāmi's feet he said, "I had been to Rajkot a couple of days before passing away of Shrimad in 1901. That time he had said that Ambālālbhāi, Saubhāgyabhāi and you had gained Self-enlightenment during his lifetime. That time I took those words as news. During the three years since his departure I could make out that those words were uttered for my benefit. Since passing away of the Graceful Lord you are my resort. If he had told you something about me, please command me in that respect. Now I am old; what else can be more pitiable than my dying without the right perception? I entreat you to have grace upon me." So saying he laid his head at the feet of Lallujiswāmi with tears in the eyes.

Lallujiswāmi gently raised his head and said, "You are aware of what the Graceful Lord has said in his letters and of the pursuit to be resorted to." Dhārashibhāi then made out that he needed to endeavor for being more worthy. Out of impatience, however, he repeatedly urged to confer grace upon him. Thereupon Lallujiswāmi told him about Smaran-Mantra that the Graceful Lord had asked him to give to liberation-seekers. Dhārashibhāi thanked him for the same and had started resorting to the Mantra.

At the end of monsoon Lallujiswāmi went to Bhavnagar and from there to Khambhāt. There he contacted Ambālālbhāi. Since there was the epidemic of plague in Khambhat, it was thought that both of them should go to Vatāman for a few days and ponder over the teaching of Graceful Lord. Accordingly Lallujiswāmi went to Vatāman along with other monks. They received the message that Ambālālbhāi would reach there on a particular day. Meanwhile, however, Ambālālbhāi got infected with plague. Within 15 days of monks' reaching Vatāman it was learnt that he had left the body.

Meanwhile 'Shrimad Rajchandra' volume was compiled but was not published. When it was published by Param Shrut Prabhāvak Mandal in 1904, a copy was sent to Lallujiswāmi. Since then he used to have it with him. Earlier he used to read and contemplate over the copies of Shrimad's letters received from Ambālālbhāi. He was now pleased to have almost all the letters of Shrimad in the said volume.

While moving towards Idar Lallujiswāmi passed the monsoon of 1905 in Vadāli. The people there initially looked at his Sthānakwāsi guise with derision. Since, however, he used to regularly go to temple and perform worship, the people started coming to him and felt pleased with his impartial talks. Mādhavji Rewāji Sheth came in close contact with him; thereby that family became devoted to him. Akhechand and others also, who had initially opposed him, were impressed by his wholesome contact. That continued to increase and was retained during their lifetime. After the end of that monsoon Lallujiswāmi moved around the sacred land of Idar and passed the monsoon of 1906 in Kherālu.

During 1901 a monk named Ratnarājshri was coming from Mārṇād to Gujarat. He had heard that Shrimad was Self-realized and he wanted to gain the realization by coming in contact with him. While he was still on the way, he heard about Shrimad's passing away. So he went back to Mārṇād. He had come in contact with many learned Digambers and had studied their books. He had a high level of Kshayopasham (Destruction cum pacification of Karmas) and could give impressive discourses. As such, many intelligent truth-seekers used to come in his contact. He also had the inclination to come in contact with the followers of Shrimad, if possible. During the monsoon of 1906 he had been in Pālanpur. That time one liberation-seeker, who had come in contact with Lallujiswāmi at Kherālu, went to Pālanpur to see Ratnarājshri. He told him about Shrimad as well as Lallujiswāmi and said that the latter had led him on the right path. While praising him he said that Lallujiswāmi was highly respectable, worshipful, blessed, extraordinary being like a monk of the fourth era, and was worth contacting. Ratnarājshri was mesmerized by that description as was Haribhadrāsuri in ancient time, and was induced to contact Lallujiswāmi after the end of monsoon.

Shwetāmbaras and Sthānakwāsīs of Kherālu had been at odds since long. By virtue of Lallujiswāmi's impartial teaching during the monsoon the sensible people on both the sides happened to meet each other. Moreover, the liberation-seekers from Viramgām, Ahmedabad, Dhandhukā, Vatāman etc. used to come to see Lallujiswāmi. If they wanted to distribute presents to the community, they covered the people of both the sects. The local people gladly accepted the same and if they organized Swāmivātsalya (community dinner), they also covered both the sects. Lallujiswāmi's teaching had thus led to the unity and loss of conflict between them.

After completing the monsoon at Kherālu Lallujiswāmi and Mohanlālji proceeded towards the pilgrim place of

Tārangā. On the way there is a hillock called Dhundhalimal's Bhonkharo near Dhāndhār. It is also called Guru's Bhonkharo. At the top there is a rock rising like a tuft. Since it was not possible to climb upon it otherwise, a staircase had been erected by tying series of bamboos. Some rungs of the stairs were missing and bamboos also were broken. Though the height of the rock was scary, Lallujiswāmi carefully climbed over the stairs and reached the top. It was flat and the pleasurable wind was blowing there. As such, he considered it a good place for performing devotion and called Mohanlālji up, but the latter did not dare to go up. Encouraging him Lallujiswāmi said, "You will be pleased to come here. The bamboos are not brittle, so courageously come up." Thereupon Mohanlālji started climbing tremblingly. As he came near the top, Lallujiswāmi pulled him up. Mohanlālji was happy to be there. They performed devotion for about an hour and then went round the entire area. There was a flag tied to a rock. The local people worshipped it as the place of Guru. There was also a cave, where fairs were held some times during the year. After finishing the pilgrimage, Lallujiswāmi moved towards Vaso and passed the monsoon of 1907 there.

11

After completing the monsoon at Vaso Lallujiswāmi went to Fenāv near Khambhāt. The liberation-seekers of that village as well as those from Khambhāt had assembled at a place of retreat outside Fenāv village. One young man named Ranchhodbhāi had been there on business. He had studied the books of Vedānt and had gained some background thereof. As he came to know that Lallujiswāmi had been there, he came to see him. His father Laxmichandji had left the sect along with Lallujiswāmi. As such, Ranchhodbhāi did not have the opportunity to come in contact with the monks of Sthānakwāsi sect. Moreover with his knowledge of Vedānt he did not have much regard for Jainism. As such, while the discussion was going on about the principles of Jainism, Ranchhodbhāi asked, "You believe in the detached Lords, who cannot give you anything; what is then the purpose in worshipping them?"

Lallujiswāmi did not say anything that time, and taking Ranchhodbhāi as a stranger other people ignored what he said. After all of them left, Lallujiswāmi took Ranchhodbhāi aside and asked, "Is it appropriate to raise such question in the midst of all?" Since then it was set in his mind that Lallujiswāmi was truly interested in his well being. It was unconscious sowing of the seed of affection.

From Fenāv Lallujiswāmi went to Borsad. While Devkarānji was alive, the residents of Borsad had shown their eagerness for his spending the monsoon of 1902. That could not materialize on account of his death. It was therefore settled that Lallujiswāmi should pass the monsoon of 1908 there. Borsad is not a part of Khambhāt circle; yet in view of the possibility of people of Barwālā circle arriving there during the monsoon, Lallujiswāmi decided to stay in Digambar inn. Laxmichandji was with him. For devotion, prayer, religious discussion, etc, it was arranged to use the building of Jethābhāi Parmānand outside the village limits. Since many people, males as well as females, came under the influence of devotion during that monsoon, it was decided to set up 'Shrimad Rajchandra Pāthshālā' there so as to maintain the impact of devotion.

Ranchhodbhāi had been there from Nār. He asked Lallujiswāmi to show the path of liberation. That time the latter was reading 'Shrimad Rajchandra'. He held the pages pertaining to Ātmasiddhi of that book and said that those pages contained the path of liberation. Thereafter Ranchhodbhāi got the book and thought that Lallujiswāmi had pointed out the pages relating to Updeshchhāyā. Thereupon he repeatedly read those pages and was much fascinated. Thereby he came to a firm opinion that liberation can be attained in the present time by the grace of true Guru. He had, however, to stay without the wholesome contact for a couple of years, because during those years Lallujiswāmi was moving towards Vadāli, Pālitānā etc.

During 1907 and 1908 Lallujiswāmi had been in Charotar area and had passed the monsoons at Vaso and Borsad. As such, Ratnarājshri, who was moving in North Gujarat, could not see him despite his inclination to get in contact. It seems from his letter that he might have come in contact with Lallujiswāmi after 1908 during the latter's moving around Vadāli and Idar. The letter states, "The objective of this writer remains the same as mentioned during our meeting and as discussed on the way to Ahmedabad and Siddhapur."

Popatlāl Mahokamchand frequently used to come in contact with Lallujiswāmi. Ratnarājshri's contact with him had led to the growth of affectionate devotion for Lallujiswāmi. Meanwhile he happened to read the manuscript copies of Shrimad's writing that Dāmjbhāi had. That led to increase in his sense of devotion and he felt that it was worth

staying at the service of Lallujiswāmi. It was therefore decided that all the monks should pass the monsoon of 1910 together at Pālitānā.

Before going to Pālitānā Ratnarājshri and other monks had been to Mahetarānā on a pilgrimage. There he gave up the Sthānakwāsi dress, stopped tying Muhpatti to the mouth and adopted peacock feather in place of whisk. Peacock feather being less cumbersome and helpful in maintaining vigilance, it was adopted by all the monks. Ratnarājshri was a good orator. By virtue of his impressive talks he could satisfy the minds of everyone and could effectively counter all sorts of criticism. On account of his presence in that monsoon other monks had thus no reason to worry.

At Mahetarānā Ratnarājshri had adopted five rules. Their significance had been repeatedly discussed among the monks. As such, those rules had become common among them. They were as under.

I shall not hold the name that does not correspond to my attributes.

I shall not be lax in endeavor for developing the required attributes.

I shall not enter into disputes about the nature of soul with so-called mendicants.

I shall not raise objection, if one undertakes devotional service as per his tradition.

I shall not desire to get reward for benevolence towards anyone and shall not desire to get service from one, whose sense of service might have gone down. I shall serve with the sense of servicing, and shall not desire or accept anything done by others without the sense of servicing.

In light of the rule number four if someone worshipped with sandalwood, flowers etc. he had to be allowed to do so. Lallujiswāmi had no intention to be worshipped. In order, however, not to be an obstacle in the matter he accepted the same as a bitter peel. Such comfortable distress serves as a test for capability to undergo internal austerity. It became handy to those with hostile attitude in raising distress, obstruction etc. That created tough situation for the monks and became instrumental for them to observe the austerity.

Lallujiswāmi and other monks passed the monsoon of 1910 together at Pālitānā. They had decided not to enter into controversy with anyone. As such, they did not respond even when the monks and laymen criticized their strange garb with peacock feather etc. They treated it as unheard and did not keep it in mind.

At Pālitānā a Kutchi person named Shivji had set up Jain Boarding House and had organized there 'Veer Atthāi Mahotsav' (Eight days festival for Lord Mahāveer). The monks used to go there and have talks with Shivji; but the significance of their esteem, which arises out of the intimate contact, did not occur to him during that monsoon. He could simply accept them as straightforward and devoted followers of Shrimad. He was, of course, impressed by the talks of Ratnarājshri and considered it significant. Later on he had stayed at Siddhapur Āshram for a couple of months, but his mind did not feel there at rest.

Once a year or so he used to come to Agās in order to see Lallujiswāmi. After 26 years (In 1936) he came to stay there for one month. That time he realized the devotional approach, greatness and broadmindedness of Prabhushri as Laghurājswāmi was known then. When he came in contact with devotees of Dhāman, he could recall the ancient tale of Shrikrishna. Uddhavaji was sent by Shrikrishna to Gokul and had come back highly impacted by the devotional spirit of Gopāngnā. Similarly Shivji had been highly impressed by the devotional approach of Lallujiswāmi.

Lallujiswāmi frequently used to recall the service rendered by Shivji at Pālitānā. The above-said graceful contact for one month seems to have occurred in order to repay that debt. Lallujiswāmi could have attracted him to Agās in his last year for that very purpose. Shivji felt so excited by the devotional approach that he frequently used to sing to liberation-seekers of Agās the songs like 'Agāsna Sant' (Saint of Agās) and 'Mane Malyā Guruvār Jnāni Re' (I got the enlightened Guru) etc. composed by him.

From Pālitānā Lallujiswāmi and others proceeded towards Khambhāt, while Ratnarājshri went moving around Pālanpur, Deesā etc. For three years thereafter Ratnarājshri was not in contact with Lallujiswāmi, but the spirit of devotion that he had gained could not be erased. His devotedness for Shrimad is apparent in his poems like

‘Ratnasanchay’ (Collection of Jewels), ‘Bhaktiratna Chintāmani’ (Desire-yielding Jewel of Devotion) etc. He has adored Lallujiswāmi as Laghurājswāmi and has devotionally expressed the gratitude for his benevolence. It is likely that correspondence might have taken place between the two during those three years, but it has not been retained. The poems of Ratnarājshtri, however, bear witness to the increase in his affection.

12

From Pālitanā Lallujiswāmi and others went towards Charotar and arrived at Khambhāt, while Ratnarājshtri went to Vavāniā and from there to Umardashi for the monsoon of 1911. For Lallujiswāmi it was the fifth monsoon at Khambhāt after an interval of 15 years. He had written to Ratnarājshtri expressing the desire for contact and instructions. The latter’s reply indicates how Laghurājswāmi had cultivated the humbleness to get instructive advice even from a pupil-like person. Ratnarājshtri had written:

“The writer is an obedient servant of the saintly people. If you therefore pull the string, he would be automatically drawn towards you like a magnet... As regards instructive talks, I have to humbly request you not to expect the same from a pitiable person like me.” Ashvin, V.S. 1967 (About October 1911)

In another letter of the same month Ratnarājshtri had asked for some advice and Laghurājswāmi had given it brief. In return Ratnarājshtri had written, “You are writing that I should give advice, but I do not have that capability. Actually where is the scope for my giving advice to a pure soul, to purified consciousness, to the extraordinarily enlightened? ... A little intelligence does not mean the existence of self-realization... Whether slightly or highly knowledgeable, only those, who have pacified or destroyed the wrong tendencies, are competent to gain self-realization, it is going to arise only to them. They are the highly spiritualized godly beings.”

By the time the monsoon was coming to the close Ranchhodbhāi of Nār thought that since Laghurājswāmi was at Khambhāt, it was the time to gain the path of liberation from him; nothing else needed to be done. With that intention he went to Khambhāt. By repeatedly reading the section of Updeshchhāyā from ‘Shrimad Rajchandra’ he had come to the conclusion that liberation can even be gained at present from a true Guide. He was of the firm opinion that he understood the book and that what he had concluded was the essence thereof. When, however, he noticed the learned liberation-seekers minutely discussing the contents of the book in the presence of Laghurājswāmi, his egoism went down; he felt that he knew almost nothing.

At the end of monsoon Laghurājswāmi and others went to Vadvā; Ranchhodbhāi also was with them. Much of their time was spent in attending to Poojans performed in melodious tune by the people from Khambhāt. That time the monks used to take one meal a day; the rest of the day was passed in worship and devotion. After finishing the evening-ritual Laghurājswāmi and other devotees used to go to the seacoast while reciting some stanzas or chanting the Mantra. Laghurājswāmi, with peacock feather in his hand, used to chant the stanzas like ‘Drashti Thirāmānhe Darshan Nitye Ratnaprabhāsam Jāno Re ... E Gun Rājāno Na Visāru Vahālā Sambhārun Dinrāt Re’ (The perception in the fifth ascetic state is like the luster of a jewel. I would never forget that attribute of Raj and recall it day and night). At times he would interchange a line or two of one stanza with another and sing the same in a far-reaching tone. That way they would spend the whole night on the seacoast. Some of the colleagues, who felt tired after singing for a couple of hours, would either go home or sleep on the coast. In the early morning while they proceeded towards the town, Tribhovandās and other followers would be waiting on the road with milk, water etc. Out of that they would take what they liked and then go to Vadvā. Then after finishing the morning-ritual they would get involved in worship and devotion. Laghurājswāmi thus spent 19 days and nights in devotion without taking sleep. The unique force of his devotion led to the rise of devotion in the minds of many people.

During all those days Ranchhodbhāi was with Laghurājswāmi. The impact of devotion on his mind was so great that he almost forgot everything about his business, family etc. When he had to go for the sake of business, the sense of devotion stayed in his mind. He even thought of not going back home and informed Laghurājswāmi accordingly. But the latter advised him that one should wait for the right moment; Jain path stipulates a relative approach; it is not worth adopting a way that can later lead to worries, and so on. On hearing him Ranchhodbhāi went back to work with hesitation, but his mind could not remain involved in worldly activities.

During 1912 Laghurājswāmi moved in Charotar area and passed the monsoon at Vaso. That was his third monsoon

at the place after an interval of 11 years. Mohanlālji and Chaturlālji were with him. During that monsoon Ratnarājshri had written a letter to him. Being worth thinking over it is given below.

#### AUM Tat Sat

Gratified is the life of the person, who has experienced soul, for whom the path of detached Lords is the only objective, and who stays beyond all other modes.

Saint is he, who conceives of the worldly happiness as untrue, overcomes all sorts of insults, and stays exclusively on the path indicated by Shrimad Rajchandra.

The humble servant Ratnarājshri, who longs for the saintly contact, devotionally bows day and night to Laghurājswāmi, who holds such attributes.

“I am seeking the grace of the highly Graceful Lord; let my obeisance be at his feet.

“Lord, you always stay in total quietude and hence continually avail the self-delight. As this writer has adopted your shelter since long, he should also get the benefit thereof. From the physical point of view one should be evidently grateful to him, who has been helpful in getting the right conviction, and as such I am resorting to him. From the absolute point of view, however, all the saints are the same, they are perceived the same, and should be considered the same.

“Since this writer stays at your shelter, it is requested that you will certainly grace him in fulfilling his expectation; I mean you will relay the wave that would enable his inner capability to attain the desired objective. My Lord, pity over me; have compassion for me; please come to my rescue. What else can I write? Everything becomes manifest in your knowledge.”

During 1913 Laghurājswāmi was moving in Charotar along with Ratnarājshri and it was almost settled to pass that monsoon in Khambhāt. Since the behavior of the latter was, however, considered controversial by many liberation-seekers, Laghurājswāmi decided to pass that monsoon at Borsad. That was his second monsoon at the place after an interval of five years. This time also his camp was in Digambar inn. Most of his time was, however, spent in devotion, worship, etc. at Jethālāl Premānand’s building.

This time he developed arthritis at both the knees. By virtue of falling at feet on the salty sand his knees had been swollen. As such, it became difficult for him to make movement. The disease was not cured in spite of several measures adopted for the purpose. On the contrary it grew and continued till the end of his life. He had therefore suggested to the liberation-seekers during that very monsoon that if he got a hut or other shelter in woods, he would like to stay there and spend the time in reading Shrimad’s Vachanāmṛut. This shows his longing to stay lonely, and away from the people. On the other hand, the following letter of Ratnarājshri indicates the desire to illuminate the right path. That would also show how intense (Though kept under control) that desire could be in the mind of Laghurājswāmi, by virtue of which Ratnarājshri was induced to write about it.

“My Lord, You are the accomplished ascetic in every way.

“How can a childless woman know the pangs of delivery? How can knowing amount to experiencing?

“My only aspiration now is to see that the disentangled monks and nuns, celibate males and females and other followers of the Graceful Lord move over the earth while resorting to their own as well as others’ well being. In that case I want to join their delightful state and eventually merge with them. Otherwise I want to merge within my true Self and that needs to be done early while moving on unknown land... When and where can I get the opportunity to see you? After seeing you, would there be the scope for remaining at your feet? I am concluding this letter while wishing victory for the path of Graceful Lord.”

Poojak Parishah Dai Rahyā, Āp Rahyā Samabhāv, Dhanya Sant Laghurājji, Laghumān Laghu Bani Sāv.  
Grishmatani Garami Ghani, Gani Hitkāri Ishta, Keri Amrut Fal Bane, Tem Mahātmā Mishta.

(Saint Laghurājswāmi, even while the former worshippers extended hardships, you retained the equanimity by resorting to the utmost humility. The great men become helpful by bearing the hardships, as mango turns into an ambrosial fruit by bearing the acute heat of summer.)

On account of the arthritis Laghurājswāmi wanted to stay lonely in a solitary place. He had informed others accordingly and had not retained any monk with him. Being aware of the hostile elements Ratnarājshri could not bear the helpless lonely state of Laghurājswāmi. As such, he had written as under in early 1914.

“Lord, it would be better, if you stay independently at a place where there is no hostile Jain nearby.” After a week he again wrote, “How could it be helpful to us to remain unaffected after knowing that you have been moving in the acquainted areas while bearing hardships from the people? What else can we say to you, the fulfilled ascetic saint? ... Only those, who exercise control, can be helpful to the restrained ones.”

At Nadiād Laghurājswāmi had stayed in the Kumbhnāth temple and one person had remained at his service. Since it was hard for him to move on account of arthritis, Ratnarājshri and other liberation-seekers had thought of making some arrangement for erecting a temporary structure like a mini Āshram, where Laghurājswāmi could stay. In this connection Ratnarājshri had written to him as under in 1914.

“We have induced revered Mohanlālji to go to Narodā.... The possibility of constructing Āshram needs to be materialized. In order to remove the obstacles that may come in the way of that wholesome project, it is necessary for Mohanlālji or someone else to remain present there.” Three months thereafter he had written in another letter, “It is necessary to make temporary arrangements to the extent possible; we can think of the bigger project later on. For the present also they are frequently making excuses.” In a succeeding letter during the same month he had written, “Regarding construction of Sanātan Jain Āshram for the monks Kālidāskākā has sent a letter that so and so have objected to constructing Āshram there and have flatly declined to give the amount pledged for the purpose... You are straightforward and simpleminded. The selfish people misuse what you say with courtesy; they state that since Laghurājswāmi does not want Āshram, why do we need to take any trouble for the same? That way they set aside the project and hide their intent in your name. ... Now it is up to you to come to the final decision. Everything else is okay by virtue of the wholesome impact of yours.”

In reply Laghurājswāmi wrote during the summer, “You know that we are soft at heart; we do not have difference with you... We are willing to abide by what you do; there is nothing to disagree about. If they say something in our name, what can we do? ... In view of the perverse view of the people it is hard to make out what to do... We believe that everything occurs as destined; we would simply observe the same dispassionately. ... Nothing occurs as we desire and whatever occurs is right. .. We are looking for wholesome contact and what occurs is unwholesome. .. We are desirous of your contact, but there arise the obstacles that could have been destined. ... You are aware of all that.”

This much description of the Āshram at Narodā has been given to show how Laghurājswāmi had behaved dispassionately without feeling depressed in very tough situations. Shrimad had written in a letter ‘Do not feel depressed; do not worry about what is going to happen... do not feel even a bit frightened... That itself is the symbol of attaining supreme devotion; only that can justify our contact.’ By virtue of pondering over such words Laghurājswāmi could not be depressed or get overcome by the sense of dependence.

Mohanlālji had been to Umardashi for hand-shaving etc. He had written, “On the day I left Siddhapur, the ruler of Pālanpur had been to see Ratnarājshri and had very humbly requested him to go to Pālanpur. It is likely that Ratnarājshri may go there once for satisfying the king’s mind.”

Thereafter Ratnarājshri had been there for a couple of months. The king had requested him to pass the monsoon there, but he could not do so on account of adverse climate. As the king asked for being helpful in some respect, Ratnarājshri had suggested for donating substantial amount for the Āshram to be constructed at Narodā for

Laghurājswāmi and other saints. Accordingly the king had sent Lālbhāi to Laghurājswāmi with a bag of guineas. Laghurājswāmi had declined to accept it and the same was sent to Ratnarājsri. That amount was used for setting up 'Siddhapur Rājmandir'.

About twenty years thereafter a monastic had been to Laghurājswāmi at Agās Āshram. He had earlier been to Ratnarājsri. He said to Laghurājsri, "The money that the Muslim king of Pālanpur had sent to you represented the interest earned on the war bonds purchased by the king. Since interest is unacceptable to Islam, they do not make use of it. It was very good that you did not accept that amount." Laghurājswāmi, of course, was not aware of it, when he declined to accept the amount; it had simply happened as per proverb that everything goes straight by resorting to straightforwardness.

What was in the mind of Laghurājswāmi was that to accept the amount received by virtue of other's effort is inappropriate and constitutes a depressed and dependent state of mind. The impact of wholesome Karma arises after the end of unwholesome one; that occurs like ebb and flow. Whatever has been destined is going to arise; we have not to look for anything. While courteously returning the amount to Ratnarājsri he had also written a letter to him. Ratnarājsri was pleased thereby.

In a letter of July 1914 Laghurājswāmi wrote to Ratnarājsri, "You are compassionate; I would like you to act like a cowboy leading the herd of liberation-worthy people on the right path so that they can resort to the religion of detached Lords." Ratnarājsri replied, "You are the true religion incarnate; I have noticed your superb state. As such, you have been directing the liberation-worthy people towards the unique right path; whatever you command in that respect for raising our vigor needs to be carried out by us. Highly ascetic Guru, since one needs to have a high capability even to present the unique path of Graceful Lord, how much competency would be required to spread the same? ... Now it is worth taking the vow for staying within the Self while destroying the operative Karma and to move without concern for embodiment."

For the monsoon of 1914 Laghurājswāmi stayed in Kumbhnāth temple at Nadiād. Many liberation-seekers used to come there to see him, to get the benefit of his contact and to practice accordingly. Ratnarājsri has written in that connection, "Bhagavati Ārādhana is now read in the class of males, while Bharateshwar Bāhubali Vrutti Bhāshāntar Kathāng in the class of females. Moreover, Chaturlālji has arranged for reading Ātmasiddhishāstra in that class.... The Graceful Lord has termed this time as very tough and it is sad to say that the same is being experienced. ... It is worth seeking one's own well being and depart."

Strange is the state of prevailing Karma; miseries come over in series. After losing the crown-like shelter of the Graceful Lord, Laghurājswāmi lost the lifelong companion Devkaranji. The only support that he had thereafter was from Ambālālbhāi. That also was lost. The physical strength went on decreasing with the increase in age. Moreover, he was suffering from hernia, piles and rectal prolapse. He had thus to face many obstacles in observance of external restraints. Because of his tendency to stay away from all sorts of connections he had inclination to move lonely among hills and forests like Chidānandji. It was, however, hard for him to make movement due to arthritis and he had to stay steady in Kumbhnāth temple at Nadiād. There he had not to face the problems from hostile Jains. Moreover, other people being desirous of getting to the path of liberation, he started the above activities as religious duty, but there arose a problem.

On the full-moon day of Shrāvan (Mostly in August) Brahmins came there for change of sacred thread. They resented a Jain monk's staying in the temple. Feeling envious, they poisoned the ears of trustees and forced him to vacate the place. Fortunately there were some well-to-do liberation-seekers, who rented the so-called Dhendhā building from Nānāsāheb and the routine set up at Kumbhnāth temple was resumed.

Ratnarājsri has written in a letter, "Ranchhodbhāi is a pious man; he is practical, speaks well and is judicious. It is worth heeding to his request. The circumstances are not going to remain the same." In another letter he wrote, "My Lord, you are fortunate! On one side the sage of Umardashi and others are ready to be at your service... You are, of course, forgiving and devoid of desires... Your affectionate and compassionate nature becomes instrumental in delaying the arrangements for your staying independently... It occurs in the mind that there would be no alternative but to give up the compassion. It is learnt that the steps are now being taken for improving the school of Khambhāt; it is possible that they may insist on your staying there. In that case our efforts for making arrangements for you here may seem susceptible." Āso Vad 1 Samvat 1970 (About October 1914)

After the end of monsoon Laghurājswāmi was thinking to find out a place of retreat and stay there alone. Ratnarājshri was inclined to stay with him during the tour or while on a pilgrimage. Since it was, however, physically not possible for him to move towards Nadiād, he had written to postpone that plan. At the end of monsoon Laghurājswāmi proceeded towards Umreth. From there he had written to Ratnarājshri, “It is no longer possible for me to move around; arthritis has come to stay, the problem of piles is there and the whole body is aching. As such, I am thinking to go to Nadiād via Uttarsandā.”

Meanwhile Ratnarājshri had some talks with a few people. By the end of 1914 he had mentioned in a letter, “I guess from the talks that it is not possible to maintain the standards of the followers without setting up someone as the Chief. The questions would be, ‘Who would come forward for that purpose and whom should we adopt as Chief?’ One more problem is that so far the followers have been behaving like an army without commander; would they be willing to carry out the commands of Chief in the interest of spiritual benefit? ... The concept of having a Chief is adorable, but it is not clear in what mode and with what intention the concept might have arisen. On our part it is clear that we should resort to the commands of Graceful Lord and pass away. If we do not denigrate its significance, it is possible that we may come in contact with someone of a similar caliber. We can then resort to his evident commands. Though saintly persons can be categorized as belonging to past, present or future, there is no essential difference among them; substantially they are identical.”

Regarding the affliction that Ratnarājshri had to face Laghurājswāmi had written from Chaklāsi, “From Umreth we went to Pansorā and from there we arrived here at Chaklāsi. ... We are going to stay here five or six days.... You deserve compliments for patiently bearing the affliction. Those, who cause the affliction, become instrumental in eradicating the Karma... Everything will be alright by the grace of Guru.”

Below are given some extracts from the letters of Ratnarājshri to give an idea of the tough situation that Laghurājswāmi and others had to face.

In early 1915 he wrote to Ranchhodhbhai, “Please do not treat this as my preaching; I am writing this in an affectionate and fraternal mode, heeding to that and behaving cautiously in the matter amounts to resorting to commands of the living Guide. You are smart, practical and straightforward. It is, however, necessary to have firmness of mind. The so-called liberation-seekers are now exposed. We have therefore to do what we think right. You are fortunate to get the responsibility of taking care of great Laghurājswāmi.”

Since he could not keep patience, he left Deesā for Nadiād. On the way he developed pain at the feet and had to halt at Pānsar. From there he devotionally wrote; “Let my obeisance be at the lotus-like feet of graceful great Lord Laghurājswāmi.... I cannot imagine anything more worthy and helpful than the desire to see you and to remain in your contact. It is said that wherever there is Ram, there is Ayodhyā. Similarly the fourth era prevails for us wherever you stay. My intention was to move to a remote place for retreat, but I am longing for a glimpse of your elderly, divine, evidently benevolent personality, which is more valuable than a precious jewel. Moreover, I feel that the occasion of changing the fold is close and it would be worthwhile, if it happens in the presence of impressive great man like you.... I hope to be shortly in your presence, but don’t worry if it is delayed on account of my foot problem. It would be better if my coming there is kept a secret... Knowing that injustice is done to others on my account, my tendency stays in protecting their well being.” A few days thereafter he wrote from Adālaj, “I will let you know everything when I reach in your presence; this is not the time to trust anyone.”

With improvement in health Ratnarājshri had been to Nadiād for a few days and left, because he had the inclination to move at unknown places. During the summer of 1915 he wrote from Bharuch, “While thinking over the affliction caused to you I feel amazed at the hard time of Kali age. Instead of serving you in the old age, they are indulging in disrespect, giving you hard time and causing affliction. Is this the way of seeking liberation! My Lord, you might have noticed the tendency of those liberation-seekers! What else now remains to be done by them?”

After a week he wrote from Baroda, “Now the long monsoon period becomes due. My Lord, it is worth to move cautiously, because the hostile forces are out to eject you from that place. ‘What wrong a wicked one would not do?’... In spite of my inclination to stay unknown I have repeatedly requested for being in your presence, because one needs to make changes with the changing circumstances... If something untoward happens in my absence, my inclination for retreat would lose its purpose.”



In a letter to Chaturlālji he had written, “You are lucky to be at the service of Laghurāṁswāmi at the right time; your birth in this life stands gratified by the servicing... If my presence is required, do let me know... I would be there as soon as possible. Don’t worry about my convenience or liking. ... Had there been quiet and peaceful conditions, it would not have been necessary to notify to me. The occasion has, however, arisen when it occurs to me to pray to the Lord to come to the help. I had the intention to stay at Bharuch, but I could not stay at ease when I heard all this. The people there pressed me for staying, but I left the place. In this burning hot season I have come here (Vadodarā) in five days despite the present condition of my body. Now I am waiting for your message.”

Two months thereafter he wrote, “The carefully used words of sweet-speaking persons appear trustworthy, but the hidden meanings thereof can be borne only by forgiving people like you... Total absence of all the connections is worthwhile.” During the succeeding month he wrote, “Those people have adopted the line of creating popular hostility. They state that Laghurāṁswāmi is straightforward, but Ratnarāj has been inciting him by poisoning his ears... The purpose of such accusation is that as I would not tolerate such wrong accusations, I would move away saying, ‘Keep Swāmi with you, I will not go to him.’”

A few weeks later he wrote, “I was very glad to read your graceful letter. Mansukhbhāi Ravjibhāi and Poojābhāi Motā had been here and have availed the benefit of contact for two days. Both of them were praising you and had shown their sense of devotion and faith in you. They have asked me to make the arrangements for you the way I consider fit and have agreed to pay the cost. Pointing out what is said in stanza 10 of Ātmasiddhi I have explained that their proposal should be in pure sense of servicing; if there be anything hidden therein, they should better make it plain... That sort of talks has taken place.”

In reply Laghurāṁswāmi had written, “Whatever is destined will occur; we will see it as a spectator.” In another letter also he had specified, “We do not want to get involved in such intricacies of the people; we would simply observe by the grace of God.”

These extracts from the long drawn correspondence have been given to give an idea of the afflictions that Laghurāṁswāmi had to face during two years’ stay at Nadiād. The words used by Ratnarāṁshri indicate the tough conditions prevailing at that time. From the original letters it is seen that most of them were sent by hand delivery; many of them contained recommendations to learn from the persons concerned what could not be specifically mentioned in the letters. Laghurāṁswāmi did not want to publicize the faults of others, but the expressions in those letters indicate the toughness of the situations. We have heard the same from those, who had brought the letters. We, however, refrain from detailing the same in view of the saintly approach of the great man. Not mentioning of those letters could have resulted in injustice to the man, whose life we have undertaken to narrate. These extracts give an idea of his lion-like nature in terms of tolerance, unique devotion towards true Guru, and exclusively resorting to him under testing circumstances.

Without casting aspersion on anyone we intend to convey that religious activity would remain coordinated so long as monetary, verbal and renouncing forces go together. The activities of liberation-seekers therefore seemed well-coordinated for about 13 years from the time of Shrimad’s departure to Laghurāṁswāmi’s stay at Nadiād. Thereafter the liberation-seekers were split in two groups. That might have occurred, because the attitude of the person, who was extending the finance, was changed, or because he presented to the main liberation-seeker the figure of expenses during those years and thereupon a devotee paid that amount. Laghurāṁswāmi thought the split as hurtful to the order. He therefore said that whoever turns them to unity would be a wise man. The so-called main liberation-seeker did not like those words. He therefore asked Laghurāṁswāmi to be with one of the groups, otherwise he would have to be helpless. The guy meant that if Laghurāṁswāmi did not side with his group, that group would have to work against him.

On that very day Laghurāṁswāmi moved from the building rented by that group and went to the town. Thus he decided to stay away from that support. Thereupon that group started slandering the monks by raising the questions about the monastic code to be observed where liberation-seekers assemble for devotion and about the behavior of the monks that time. With such questions they intended to convey that the monks had been spoilt and behaved in a way that would denigrate the path of Graceful Lord. Thus they started talking in a way that would reduce respect for the monks, and the people may tend to despise them. Instead of being helpful to the monks, those people were out to use their mental, physical and financial capabilities for regulating the monks.

Shrimad had said to Laghurājswāmi that business people would try to be their guides. Those so-called reformers were making that prediction effective... It became hard for the monks to move in Charotar region, where there had been many followers of Shrimad. In order to know about the movements of Laghurājswāmi those people had arranged for a man who professed to belong to monks' side, but actually kept watch over the people who came to Laghurājswāmi, the nature of their talks, plans for movement etc. and convey the same to the main person. That group thus continued to make the monks tiresome so as to force them towards its side. For showing his outward regard for Laghurājswāmi the main person used to see him at times and display outward courtesy.

By the end of 1915 monsoon Ratnarājshri sent a packet of medicines to Laghurājswāmi and wrote that he would soon reach Nadiād. There was a lonely Kāmnāth temple at Kānisā, which both of them had seen. The keeper of the temple had sent two letters to Ratnarājshri inviting him to stay there. Considering Ratnarājshri as more practical Laghurājswāmi usually acceded to what he said. It was within his nature to go along with others' views even at the cost of his own convenience. After the arrival of Ratnarājshri at Nadiād both of them therefore went to stay at the temple.

Ratnarājshri was of the opinion that it would be better if there could be a separate room for Laghurājswāmi. He therefore arranged for erecting a cottage with help and permission of the local people. Ranchhodbhāi used to provide finance in order to see that the monks were not anyway inconvenienced. Laghurājswāmi was, however, practical and considerate. He could see that only one man had to bear all the costs. Since it was not possible to change the nature of Ratnarājshri, he had made up his mind to move to a lonely place. After the devotional worship on the occasion of Shrimad's anniversary in 1916 when Ratnarājshri went to Ahmedabad in order to see Gandhijee, Poojābhāi and others, Laghurājswāmi left the place and went to Nār. Meeting Laxmichandji and Ranchhodbhāi he said that he no longer wanted to be a burden upon anyone. He would therefore go to woods and end the life while observing Kāusagga; he did not want anyone to go to him. Ranchhodbhāi had narrated that with tears in his eyes.

From Nār Laghurājswāmi went to Nadiād and from there to Ahmedabad, where he stayed in an inn. Meanwhile Ratnarājshri had been to Pālanpur. Laghurājswāmi saw Gandhijee, Poojābhāi and others and then proceeded towards Saurāshtra. Kābhai Mundās of Sunāv had accompanied him. Initially he was to go to Kunkāvāv and then to Junāgadh. The monsoon of 1916 was passed there. He did not enter into much correspondence after setting up at Junāgadh. For some time he did not write even to Ranchhodbhai.

About the conditions at Junāgadh he has mentioned, "Steady at the nice woody place; this is the right place of retreat for ascetics to meditate, a pleasurable place where the mind can rest in peace, the lonely place; it is convenient in every respect, water also is conducive and no problem is to be faced... This location is very convenient to the detached, ascetics and meditators... My Lord, I feel very light-hearted; no one says a word by the grace of true Guide; on the contrary the people display devotional mode... Here all sorts of fancy and disturbance come to the end... Delightful enlightenment prevails by virtue of surrendering to the Guru... Plague had shown its face in the city, but it is good that there is no impact here in Prakāshpuri (beyond the city limits). We have informed Kalyāñjibhāi of Bagasarā that we would not go to him at present. God willing, we want to stay here for the time being; we would see what happens later on."

In another letter he has mentioned, "It is a pleasure that I can at present endeavor at ease to calm down the tendencies by the grace of true Guru. It is possible to remain merely an observer of the ascetic measures that are being resorted to at ease. That is the only truth; everything else is false. Why indulge in fancy?"

On the occasion of 1916 Samvatsari while atoning for the faults he wrote to Ratnarājshri, "I am sorry to learn about your physical condition regarding swoon and loss of tongue. I had noticed that problem earlier and wish that no one gets such disease.... I am longing to get the news of your recovery."

After the end of monsoon Laghurājswāmi went to Bagasarā along with Ratilāl Motichand of Rajkot and stayed in his ginning factory for a month. Manibhāi and Kalyāñjibhāi of Bagasarā had the occasions to see him at Nadiād, Kānisā and Junāgadh. During the plague epidemic at Junāgadh they wanted to take him to Bagasarā. As such, Laghurājswāmi moved from the ginning factory to Manibhāi's place and stayed there for most of the year 1917. Manibhāi had mostly to stay at Bombay for his business, but his parents and other family members remained at the service of Laghurājswāmi. Moreover, Manibhāi came from Bombay a couple of times in order to see him. He has

mentioned, “After the morning routine Laghurājswāmi used to go to woods for natural call etc. and come back after two hours. In the evening he used to give religious talks. During the monsoon some people from Charotar area came to see him and to get in his contact.”

It is seen from the letter of Ratnarājshri that Laghurājswāmi was facing several physical problems. “I am sad to know that the great Lord has been facing double/triple afflictions ... There is a letter from Khambhāt indicating the desire to see you.”

By the end of 1916 he had written, “Lord, at present I am not able to use the tongue and hope that it would start functioning by virtue of your grace... The shelter of your hand is the source of cool shadow to me.” About Laghurājswāmi he had poetically mentioned as under.

‘I would be at the service of one, who gives up the worldly connections and stays devoted to me. Lord, we are yours and try to behave as you like.... You are our Guru and the source of wholesome contact.’

During the first quarter of 1917 Laghurājswāmi wrote to him, “For a layman the worldly life is a practicality; since, however, Vrundāvan is not the world, where is the scope for practicality there?”

“It’s a great pleasure to learn from Siddhapur that your tongue has started functioning.... Please do in a way that gives credit to the path of Graceful Lord.... I would not come in the way. I do not have any objection to Popatbhāi’s meeting with you. I would be happy, if Jayvijayji, Mohanlālji and others work united and peacefully.... I am looking for retreat and want to come in less contact with liberation-seeking males as well as females. ... I also want to restrain the correspondence.”

During the latter part of 1917 he wrote, “On account of arthritis I happen to stumble down while trying to stand up or sit down... Our role is simply to observe without getting perturbed. There is no other inconvenience. ... It has not been possible to write because of the tendency to stay within. Letters are received from many places, but it is not possible to give replies. I do not know what happens to them. My mind does not go to what liberation-seekers might be thinking. Peace prevails here, ‘Be with your Self, what is the purpose for else?’”

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Before the end of 1917 Laghurājswāmi went to Chārāniyā and after staying there for a month he went to Rajkot. There he performed devotional worship at the place where Shrimad had given up the body. Then he met Ratnarājshri at Umardashi and proceeded towards Charotar. Since the followers of Chatotar had to face his separation for four years, they had been urging him to return to Charotar. Accordingly Laghurājswāmi thought to go to Nār. By the time, however, he reached Agās, the liberation-seekers of Kāvithā came there and took him to Kāvithā. Kalyāñjibhāi and others had accompanied him up to that place. After staying at Kāvithā for about a week he went to Nār.

Due to the circumstances prevailing four years before, he had to leave Charotar. That situation was now changing and it seemed that the devotional approach was rising again in that area. That was similar to the rise of dawn after the night. Liberation-seekers from other villages also started coming to Nār in order to see him. Ranchhodbhāi had business partners. With their consent he could stay with Laghurājswāmi most of the time and draw new liberation-seekers towards the path of devotion. The physical, verbal, intellectual and monetary resources, which are instrumental in spreading the ascetic force of the saintly being, began to rise spontaneously.

At the insistence of a follower Laghurājswāmi went from Nār to Simardā. After staying there for a few days he went to Kāvithā. There he stayed for about two weeks, during which devotional worship was performed day and night. Before the monsoon period he went back to Nār and passed the monsoon there. There were many enthusiastic liberation-seekers and Manibhāi also used to come there oft and on. All of them thought that due to the old age and ill-health of Laghurājswāmi, it was necessary to construct a cottage or other residence for him. As such, they opened a monk-servicing account and urged the people to contribute. About Rs. 5000/- were collected for the purpose during that monsoon and in consultation with Ranchhodbhāi it was planned to construct a structure at a convenient place.

Simultaneously with the rise of favorable circumstances for religious uplift, the physical condition of Laghurājswāmi began to deteriorate. He was ignoring that and was endeavoring for uplift of the religious order to the extent possible. Four times he had rat-bites. Their toxic effect had stayed till the end of his life. Its impact was noticed in his blood even when he was examined in 1936 by Dr. Ratlilāl of Ahmedabad and Dr. Prānlāl of Baroda. Moreover, he continued to get fever in spite of various medications.

After the end of monsoon Laghurājswāmi went to Tārāpur during the later part of 1918 and camped in a room of the ginning factory. Shanābhāi of Nār remained at his service. Water of Tārāpur being unhygienic, the people of Nār used to bring water with them. Reading from ‘Shrimad Rajchandra’ was undertaken during that time. Manibhāi came there and stayed for a month and a half along with his family members. Maganbhāi Lallubhāi, the telegraph master of Ānand Rail Station also used to come there daily by train. On the full moon day of Fālgun, (Fifth month of the Indian calendar) 300 people from Vatāman and other places had assembled there and had enthusiastically performed the devotional worship.

While it was being considered to move to some other place on account of the unhygienic conditions of Tārāpur, Motibhāi Bhagat and Bhagvānjibhāi urged Laghurājswāmi to go to Simardā and accordingly he went there. His physical condition took a serious turn there on account of a quack treatment. That can be seen from the following extracts of a letter from Ranchhodhbhāi to Ratnarājshtri.

“At Tārāpur he was advised to take liquefied roots of a particular plant in order to remove the toxic impact of rat-bites and Laghurājswāmi had taken it for six days. That treatment was resumed at Simardā. Starting with a dose of two/three grams he increased it to ten grams. That resulted in motions and vomits. That was perceived as bearable for five days. The plant, however, being worn out, its roots had poisonous effect. That led to severe motions and vomits on the sixth day, and also caused gastric trouble. There was severe burning sensation and the body temperature went up. The stomach pain grew so acute that it seemed as if the end was near. All of us were confused. It was a small village; there was no physician, nor was any medication available. There was no one, who could be helpful. Thank God, Laghurājswāmi himself asked to feed him ghee. We hesitatingly fed a little, because he was having fever. Since that intake led some comfort, we fed it again. That day was thus passed in very risky condition. The next day he had to bear heating pain at urination and excretion, but there seemed to be more relief... The roots of the plant were discontinued. The plan of Laghurājswāmi’s and my coming to that side has been postponed.”

In reply Ratnarājshtri had written, “Laghurājswāmi is angelic and may not remain aware of his physical state; he might be dispassionately observing whatever arises. It is the duty of those, who are by his side, to take care of his body. The relationship of preceptor and pupil in spiritual realm is laid for that very purpose. ... The service that you are rendering to the manifest life-conferring personality is admirable.”

“Only those, who remain attached to true nature of Guru, can be considered really detached.

Those, who resort to the true nature of Guru, are truly ascetic.

Those, who remain at the shelter of true Guru, are truly fortunate.

Those, who stay away from true Guru, happen to cling to the branches instead of holding to the trunk.”

Since the people of Kāvithā were insisting on Laghurājswāmi’s presence, he went there. The eighteenth anniversary of Shrimad Rajchandra was celebrated there in 1919. In a letter addressed to Ratnarājshtri. Ranchhodhbhāi had described it as under.

“A large pavilion was constructed on the occasion of Shrimad’s anniversary. Therein was made a cloth covered sanctum-like a canopy in which was installed the portrait of Graceful Lord. About 200 people had come from Nār, Sunāv, Bhadrān, Borsad etc. Dāmjbhāi and Manibhāi had come from Bombay, while Poojābhāi, Kalyānjibhāi and others had been from Ahmedabad. Inclusive of the people of Kāvithā and roundabout villages there were about 2000 people, who participated in the unique devotional worship. How can I adequately describe that?”

In an encouraging reply Ratnarājshtri wrote, “Devotional worship is like the monsoon season when water flows everywhere. The flow that continues till the end of summer constitutes the smoothly moving river.”

Meanwhile the condition of Laghurājswāmi was steadily deteriorating. In order to avert the heat of summer and to

provide a place of retreat, the arrangements were made for his stay in a farm. The crop of millet in the field gave cooling effect and it was not required to go to the bank of Narmadā in order to escape from the heat. Ranchhodbhāi had mentioned in a letter to Ratnarājshri that water also was conducive. In another letter he wrote, “Laghurājswāmi can stand up with the support of two persons; he has stomach disorder and hence it is difficult for him to digest food. He is having fever and the condition goes on deteriorating.”

From Kāvithā Laghurājswāmi moved to Simardā and passed 1919 monsoon there. Paryushan Parva was celebrated there in the presence of 400 people from Bombay, Surat, Miyāgām, Dabhoi, Sanāvad, Nār, Kavithā, Mandālā, Sandesar, Simardā etc. Those eight days had passed in delightful devotional worship under the aegis of Laghurājswāmi. Since his condition was delicate, he did not speak on that occasion. One can, however, imagine how much enthusiasm might have prevailed merely by his presence at that time.

Regarding the said celebration Ranchhodbhāi has written, “Eight days of Paryushan were passed at Simardā with total devotion. By virtue of Laghurājswāmi’s graceful presence the celebration was so unique that it is hard for me to describe it. The display of the enthusiasm, which he had so far kept within his mind, has led many people towards the path of saintly being and they felt highly delighted.... Several people got swoon during the celebration and its impact continues to prevail among them.”

16<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Āso happens to be the day of Ātmasiddhi and also the birthday of Laghurājswāmi. On that occasion also about 400 people had assembled and taken part in devotional worship. That function was continued for four days.

It was decided to celebrate 52<sup>nd</sup> birthday of Shrimad Rajchandra for eight days starting with the full moon day of the month of Kārtik in Vikram era 1976 (Late in 1919). As the celebration was to be held at Sandeshar, Laghurājswāmi arrived there after the monsoon period and a highly delightful celebration took place in his presence. Ranchhodbhāi seems to have described it as under in a letter sent to Ratnarājshri.

“A large pavilion was constructed in the farm of Jijibhāi Patel that could accommodate 4000 people. In the center of the pavilion there was a square, which functioned as sanctum and there was a walkway around it. The remaining space of the pavilion was left for the people to sit. It was a grand pavilion that could hardly be constructed at a cost of 100,000 rupees. Even those, who had seen large pavilions at the time of congress sessions, were struck with wonder. That was made possible with the labor of about 50 liberation-seekers like Chhotābhāi, who voluntarily came for the purpose and worked in the spirit of dedication.

“It is learnt from the books that in earlier times the heavenly beings used to construct grand assembly halls (Samavasaran) for the Lords. We had the opportunity to see it vividly by the ascetic force of Laghurājswāmi. In his presence it seemed as if the spiritual delight was prevailing everywhere; that could be noticed by virtue of his enlightened view.

“What else can we say? About 1000 people mostly coming from other places had been present at the time of dinner. About 500 liberation-seekers from Bombay, Surat, Dabhoi, Mandālā, Māngrol, Vadāli, Nār, Khambhāt Bhādran, Sojitrā, Vaso, Sunāv, Simardā, Kāvithā, Borsad, Ode, Nadiād, Goghāvi, Ahmedabad, Vatāman etc. used to participate in the devotional worship during all the eight days. There had been about 5000 people at the time of the main function. Prayer groups from the adjoining places, particularly Pritamdās group from Sandeshar, used to come at night for the performance. The women used to perform Garabā (going round) enthusiastically with pots on their heads. During the day time there used to be Panch Kalyānak (Five blissful occasions of Lords), Navpad (Nine aspects), Chosath Prakāri (64 aspects), Ātmasiddhi (Self-realization) and other devotional Poojans. Since there was no electricity that time, the nightly programs were performed under the bright kerosene gaslights.

“Jijibhāi Kuberdās Patel of Sandeshar was thrilled on the occasion, and he has spontaneously donated a farm of about 8 acres to construct Āshram for Laghurājswāmi. That very time his relatives and other liberation-seekers from Bombay, Nār, Kāvithā, Mandālā etc. made contributions for that purpose and within half an hour the collection had

reached Rs. 17000/-. Nothing of that was done at the instance of Laghurājswāmi. The people of Bombay, Sandeshar etc. have done that in pure devotional spirit.”

It is hard to describe the impact that the liberation-seekers had of the celebration at Sandeshar. Kalyānji Kunvarji of Bagasarā had expressed it in a letter addressed to Prabhushri (The liberation-seekers started calling Laghurājswāmi by that epithet) imploring him for initiation. Some extracts are given below in order to give an idea of the impact.

“This time of Hunāvasarpini has been termed as hard and it is full of misery. To come across a man of the fourth era in this time occurs only by virtue of much wholesome Karma leading to further wholesome one. Gaining the path of Graceful Lord and coming in contact with you, the immutable, exceptionally graceful Prabhushri, during this time and pondering over the same leads to unique peace. You are the ocean of compassion; it is not possible for me to put in words the nature of soul that has been understood by virtue of your favor; you are the artist thereof. ... Prabhushri, only you are capable to explain the same and to free the liberation-seekers from all sorts of misery. From my experience I can state that I have not anywhere else seen or learnt about the evident self-realization noticed in you. I consider myself very fortunate for that.... The ability to reach the abode of supreme bliss has been noticed only in your personality. With purified heart I am therefore imploring for the same. You are capable to grant what this miserable being has been longing for. I am therefore requesting to grant it; be pleased to give the same; kindly grant it. I had heard from my Guru, the great monk, that I would get beneficence through you.

“I was feeling that I had been behaving as per your guidance, but that had been my misunderstanding; I was behaving wrongly and you have taken enough effort to bring me on the line, sometime mildly, patiently and peacefully, while at times forcefully... You have thus compassionately brought me on the line in the way you considered fit. ... For my beneficence you have left no stone unturned. ”

Spiritual elevation of the liberation-seekers, who came in his contact, thus used to occur by the grace of Prabhushri. The hearts of those, who came in such contact, bear witness to it. This is only an illustration of the feeling that was spontaneously expressed; that has been presented to give an idea of the impact that one gets of a saintly being. Shrimad Rajchandra has written, “The world does not make out the secrecy of mysterious impact; let the ascetic force of the saintly being lead to the universal beneficence, etc.” That could become manifestly clear to many liberation-seekers, who came in contact with Prabhushri. By virtue of his strong wholesome Karma the occasions arose that could be instrumental in realizing his greatness.

16

The wholesome Karma of Laghurājswāmi now started being manifest. Shrimad had told him, “Muni, this is the hard time, therefore move as simpleton; cross over the accomplishments that may arise. The people of this time are like ripe muskets and cannot bear harshness. If you therefore hold humility and stay as the benefactor, many people will gain benefit through you.”

Bearing that advice at heart, Laghurājswāmi had been moving as a simpleton. Though he was imbibed with enlightenment, he did not make it known to anyone. That position now changed. While moving at Nār, Kāvithā, Simardā etc. he started spreading the devotional spirit. On account of his enlightened state he could draw many people towards the devotional worship. Twenty five years before Shrimad had once told him to abide by what Saint Pritamdās had said. By virtue of some divine coincidence Laghurājswāmi came to be known as the great saint at Agās near Sandeshar, the native place of the saint Pritamdās.

Shrimad has said that saints hold the lives for availing the previous Karmas and for well being of the people. Noticing the spiritual urge of the people Laghurājswāmi began to extend the message of knowledge and detachment. He remained busy spreading the path of detached Lords as indicated by the Graceful Lord He was the image incarnate of devotion and detachment, and was compassionately working for well being of everyone. The people therefore used to flock to him for gaining their well being.

Since the people suffering from fire of the worldly life began to feel the cooling effect of ambrosial teaching of the great man, and since they were impressed by his wonderful state of enlightenment, they thought that it would be better if he could stay at one place so that they could continually get the advantage of his contact. That led to the rise of Āshram at Agās. Prior to that Laghurājswāmi was mostly moving in wilderness and had earned the title of a monk of woods. By staying in the Āshram he laid spiritual hues in the woody minds of the people in Charotar area. The Āshram thus became the resort for his old age like the cream coming over the surface of milk.

Since the Āshram was set up under the aegis of Laghurājswāmi, the devotees initially termed it as Laghurāj Āshram. The great man, however, did not want his name to be associated with it. He was of the opinion that while resorting to the true nature of Self, Shrimad had been instrumental in conferring the well being of several liberation-seekers. That could in no way be rewarded, nor could its significance be accurately realized. In token of his devotion to Shrimad he suggested to call the physical memorial as Sanātan Jain Dharma Shrimad Rajchandra Āshram, and hence it was named accordingly. Thereafter Āshram has continued to grow and by now has taken the shape of a well-knit village.

Laghurājswami did not look at anyone in the worldly state of a prince or pauper, old or young, male or female; he used to term them in the lasting state of pure soul. As such, he addressed everyone as Prabhu (Lord). Moreover, highly esteemed lordship was evident within him; hence the people started calling him as Prabhushri. We will also now use that term while talking about him.

17

Prabhushri passed the monsoon of 1920 with Somchand Kalyānji at Sanāvad. Thereafter he passed those of 1921 to 1923 in Agās. During 1924 he went to Sametshikhar for a pilgrimage. From there he went to Poona and passed the monsoon at the place of Mānekji Vardhamān.

Ranchhodhbhai of Nār was a devotee of Prabhushri and used to serve him physically, mentally as well as financially. He had dedicated his energy in setting up, expansion and management of the Āshram. He was also a devotee of Graceful Lord and had been instrumental in turning the minds of liberation-seekers towards Prabhushri. Having a high level of pacification cum destruction of Karma he had an admirable capacity to explain. By virtue of that he could bring the people at the feet of Prabhushri. Many people thus gave up their family traditions and became the followers of Prabhushri. Being ignorant of the nature of enlightenment some of them could not distinguish between the enlightened and knowledgeable. Guided by their earlier approach they started giving equal importance to Ranchhodhbhai and extended the same respect to him as was due to Prabhushri.

The people realize the greatness of the saintly beings when something significant occurs in the life. During the monsoon of 1924 at Poona it so happened that in absence of Prabhushri some followers one asked his son Mohanbhai to occupy the seat of Prabhushri. As Mohanbhai declined to do so, they forcibly seated him there, recited the words of bliss and worshipped him. Prabhushri was highly enraged when he came to know of it the succeeding day; he said:

“What does this mean? Do you want to start a path like the Swāminārāyan sect in which a layman occupies the presiding position and the monks bow to him? Could that be right? How did you think of a way that leads to infinite wandering and still none of you raised any objection? How can anyone place the foot on that seat? Even we bow to it and take the seat, while you resorted to such self-indulgence! ... Since you forcibly seated Mohan, how can I blame him? How come, none of you realized that it was not right?”

He reverted to the subject the next day while the song of ‘Dhanya Te Nagari Dhanya Velā Ghadi, Mātpitā Kulvansh Jinesar’ was being sung. He asked, “What is its internal significance? Is it to be taken in the worldly sense? Does Kulvansh (Family and generation) relate to the physical body? That is being done by the entire world! Here it relates to the right perception and the attributes manifested thereby denote race. That does not relate to a family generation, it relates to the ascetic force. That would prevail when the right man arises.

“We had been moving as unknown simpleton; this Ranchhodbhāi brought it to light. The saint (Shrimad) was gratified by our servicing; whatever is noticed is by virtue of his grace; it is hard to digest the same in such hard times.... There is nothing to be compared with enlightenment; (Pointing to the portrait of Shrimad) we have been staying at his shelter.

“We would like to point out one thing for the sake of general well being. There is no self-interest therein; neither do we want to be worshipped, nor do we intend to misguide. We are telling this to the witness of religious order. The scriptures state that those, who lie or try to deceive in the public meeting, commit horrible sin; they are born dumb, they lose the tongue, they stay senseless. Now those, who have trust in us, should get up, others may remain seated. Those, who want to do as we direct, should come here, place their hands in front of the portrait of Graceful Lord and state that they would stay at his command as directed by the saint.

“We thought that the people would gain benefit, if they listen to and keep faith in the words, which have been helpful to us. As such, we conferred the Mantra of ‘Sahajātmawaroop Paramguru’ (The supreme Guide abides at ease within Self) to those, who came to us. Some of them misunderstood it and began to cling to us or Popatlāl or Ranchodbhāi.... That is poison, the acute poison; that will lead to death! If you stay as directed by the Graceful Lord, there is possibility of crossing over the worldly sea. Let me tell you plainly that only the Graceful Lord is to be worshipped and adored.

“We were allowing what was being done with the idea that we would change it at the appropriate time. Do you think that we liked the garlands, flowers or worship? We were simply accepting that like swallowing a bitter peel. Now let me say that one should worship only the Graceful Lord. No doubt, one should not forsake the benevolence of others; he can have the picture of such a person as one holds that of a friend. He should, however worship only the Graceful Lord. In a way, it is good that this has happened during our life. Otherwise, you would have installed in the temple the idol of this body also together with that of Graceful Lord. That is not to be done. Shrimad has urged us to remain an aspirant up to the 12<sup>th</sup> stage of spiritual elevation. If you divert from that, you will be lost. Now whoever wishes may come here, place the hand in front of Shrimad’s portrait and state that he would stay at his command as directed by saint.”

Thereupon everyone went to the portrait one after another, spoke as directed and reoccupied the seat after bowing to Prabhushri. There were a few new-comers. Prabhushri was pleased to see them and said, “These simple people also got the benefit. Who knows how they happened to come here; their life also would be fulfilled, if they retain the faith. What we say here is not wrong; we undertake the responsibility for that; but we cannot hold responsibility for those, who resort to self-indulgence and make change this way or that way. It is not easy to undertake the responsibility, but there is no pitfall on that path. Those, who believe in Graceful Lord, are going to obtain at least the heavenly state.”

Thus during the eight days of Paryushan Prabhushri incessantly tried to bring the faith of liberation-seekers towards the Graceful Lord. Thereafter also he continuously endeavored for raising that faith till the end of his life. There is no doubt that those deserving souls, who bear his teaching at heart, would not have much to wander and would shortly reach the end of worldly cycle. One gets the benefit of coming across Truth only by virtue of good fortune. The obstinate people have, however, always been there; if they treat such teaching as insignificant, that would be self-indulgence. The enlightened being would feel compassionate, if one extends the life cycle by causing obstruction to the path of enlightenment.

After finishing the monsoon at Poona Prabhushri went to Shravanbelgodā etc. on a pilgrimage. While returning he stayed for two months with Hirālāl Zaveri at Pethāpur and returned to Agās during the spring of 1925. In the meantime the followers at Nadiād had no idea of Prabhushri’s whereabouts. By virtue of his enlightenment, however, he made out that the life of Dāhyābhāi Desai of Nadiād was coming to the end. The latter had earlier told Prabhushri that he was resorting at his shelter and had requested for taking care of him at the end of his life.



Knowing that his end was near, Prabhushri went with Jesingbhäi to Näthäbhäi Avichal Desai at Nadiäd and he was received there with a high sense of devotion. Meanwhile several other liberation-seekers assembled there. After giving them the religious message Prabhushri proceeded towards the residence of Dähyäbhäi. The liberation-seekers followed him. When they arrived at Dähyäbhäi's place, they realized that the saint had been there in order to confer quietude to Dähyäbhäi at the time of death.

When Prabhushri arrived at the deathbed, Dähyäbhäi seemed to be lying unconscious, but still he had the Graceful Lord at heart. As Prabhushri chanted the Mantra of 'Sahajätmaswaroop Paramguru' a couple of times and looked at him, Dähyäbhäi became conscious and got up. He was pleased to see Prabhushri and forgot his pain. With folded hands he bowed to Prabhushri and expressed his gratitude for being present at the end of life. Then he lied down again and stayed concentrated in listening to what Prabhushri was to say.

Prabhushri talked to him for an hour about giving up the bodily sense and remaining within the Self. That was so effective that the pious soul of Dähyäbhäi experienced an increasing degree of quiet and stayed concentrated. Thus awakening him to the Self and conferring him quietude Prabhushri left the place and proceeded towards Narodä along with Jesingbhäi. Soon after that Dähyäbhäi left the body in peace.

Prabhushri had still someone else in mind. It is said that the saints live for the sake of benevolence. He reached Narodä in the afternoon without even taking food or water and went to the place where a woman was on her deathbed. To her also he gave the message of soul being different from the body. Thus inducing her towards peace and tranquility and encouraging her to bear the pain, Prabhushri awakened her to the Self. Thus after conferring her quietude Prabhushri left the place. Thereafter the woman died. After thus conferring quietude to the two souls Prabhushri stayed overnight at Narodä and returned to Äshram the next day.

19

Prabhushri passed the monsoon of 1925 as well as subsequent 10 monsoons in Äshram. Inclusive of the three monsoons of 1921 to 1923 he thus passed 14 monsoon periods in Äshram. As his staying at Äshram went up, an increasing number of liberation-seekers came there in order to take the advantage of his presence and to get the benefit of his contact. By virtue of his teaching thousands of liberation-seekers turned towards the enlightening words of Graceful Lord and became his followers. Their enthusiasm and regard for the true path went up.

The river of a great man happens to be so vast that the rivulets of many people are merged within it and assume the vast scale. The saintly beings thus become helpful in inspiring others towards the path of well being. Such an occasion arose during 1921 on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the dark half of the month of Äshwin (Käli Chaudash) in the life of Govardhanbhäi Kälidäs Patel (who later came to be known as Brahmachäri) of the village Bändhani.

After getting graduation he had voluntarily joined the services of Charotar Education Society and had reached the position of Ächärya (Principal) in D.N.Vidyämandir, Änand. Being internally oriented he got eager to bring his conduct to an ideal level. So long as that level was not reached, he considered his holding of the position of Ächärya as deceitful. That title was thus hurting him. During the Diwali vacation when he went home, he came to know about Graceful Lord and Prabhushri through his relative Bhagvänbhäi, and got keen to go to Agäs. In the early morning of Käli Chaudash he went there along with Bhagvänbhäi.

That time Prabhushri was seated under the Räyan tree and the devotional song of 'Mool Märag' was being sung. At the very instance of seeing him Brahmachäriji gained unique peace at heart. He thought that his life would be fulfilled, if he could stay at the service of such a great man. Prabhushri explained to him the terms of Swachhand and Parigrah occurring in the song and elaborated the essence of the song. Thereafter he affectionately extended the Mantra of 'Sahajätmaswaroop Paramguru'. After the latter left, Prabhushri told an inmate that he had not conferred such Smaranmantra to anyone else. Is it not unique that one gets such initiation at the hand of a great man on Käli Chaudash, the day for attaining accomplishments?

Mysteriously functions the inspiration of great men! Their talk is so powerful that even a word of theirs changes the

life of a deserving being. Brahmachārijī was so impressed by Prabhushri's explanation of 'Tāli Swachchhand Ne Pratibandh (Removal of self-indulgence and obstacles) that he became eager to get rid of the family-ties and other bondages so as to stay at the service of Prabhushri and pass the life under his shelter. That eagerness can be seen from the following extracts of his letter addressed to his elder brother.

"I have been living for the endeavor to seek and attain Truth. I am now eager to give up everything else so as to deserve full elevation... By giving up the family forever and treating the entire world as the family I want to prepare myself to live for the rest of life as per commands of the Graceful Lord ... After leaving the family if I do not get the instruction to join the Āshram, I do not intend to wander as a mendicant. It would, however, be acceptable to me to resort to the measures that he (Prabhushri) would indicate for deserving the same. Hence I want to talk to him after getting freed from other encumbrances. ... I would be totally satisfied whether he asks me to go to Kāshi for further study or entrusts me with the trifling task of ringing the bell or of cleaning the garbage. I know that my well being lies in carrying out his commands. ... I want to spend the remaining years of my life for my benefit, or say, for rendering service to the Ashram or to the world at large. In short I want to give up the home and become a monk in order to undertake the true duty of servicing everyone. ... I have no concept of being a saint, sage or of occupying any position. Since long I have been thinking of remaining at the service of all, of being a truth-seeker. Now I want to do that."

As he gained the consent of his brother, he resigned from the job and adopted servicing Prabhushri after getting his directive. Prabhushri administered to him the vow of celibacy. Thereafter the latter incessantly stayed at his service. In early morning at 3.00 A.M. he would be reading to him Gommatsār and other sacred books. Thereafter he would undertake the devotional ritual and then stay at the service for the entire day. After the evening worship he used to read to Prabhushri up to 11.00 P.M. Thereafter he remained busy writing the diary, extracting quotations, collating, writing, making translations and giving replies to the letters as directed by Prabhushri. If a truth-seeker came to Prabhushri for getting Mantra, he would normally ask Brahmachārijī to do that.

Normally everyone is within the grip of his family religion. It is difficult to give it up and to adopt faith in the eternal true religion explained by the enlightened. The ascetic force of the enlightened, his esteem is, however, so great that it induces the people towards the true religion. Such capability of Prabhushri now became evident. He directed many Jains as well as others towards the true religion. While giving them Smaran-Mantra, he induced them to give up seven addictions and seven non-eatable articles of food. He administered the vows for the purpose and turned their inclination towards devotion of the Lords.

Many truth-seekers adopted the vow of celibacy under his inspiration. Some males adopted it for the life and stayed at the service of Prabhushri. Several girls were so impressed that they also adopted celibacy for life. Even some young couples developed detachment for the worldly pleasure. They adopted celibacy and dedicated their lives in spiritual pursuit.

Separate arrangements were made for the male celibates, who had dedicated their lives to Āshram. Similarly separate residence was provided for the celibate females. Many other spiritual aspirants adopted various types of restraints and stayed in the Āshram. There were also a few laymen, who had developed detachment. They started living in Āshram along with their families while observing restraints. They used to lead the life of retirement and spend their time in elevating their spiritual state. A few dozen people thus began to live permanently in Āshram. It thus became the lively abode of wholesome contact and devotion.

With the increase in the number of inmates, Āshram was expanded with construction of additional rooms and buildings. In due course there was constructed a Jain temple with the steeple. Therein were installed Shwetāmbar as well as Digambar idols as per instructions of Shrimad. The installation ceremony was performed in the middle of 1928 under the protective umbrella of Prabhushri.

In the basement of the temple there is a Gurumandir, in which was installed the idol of Shrimad along with Aumkār Mantra on the day of the said installation. Shrimad's footprints on the other side had already been installed in 1926. The assembly hall, lecture hall and library building were also constructed in order to accommodate the needs of increasing number of liberation-seekers. Moreover, an idol of Shrimad made of five non-ferrous metals was installed during 1932 in a mini temple above the gateway.

In spite of the ill-health Prabhushri had been moving to various places in order to be helpful to liberation-seekers. By the end of 1928 he had gone to Bhādran for 18 days and to Dharmaj for four/five days. During the summer of 1929 he had moved for about two months at Bharuch, Jhagadiā, Nikorā etc. In 1930 he had been to Karamsad, Sunāv, Verā, Borsad, Dāol etc. In 1931 he had been to Simardā, Nadiād, Nār etc. and had performed the installation ceremony at Nār. In 1932 he had been to Petlād, Dantāli, Simardā, Kāvithā etc. Wherever he went, he used to spread the religious hue and direct the people towards the right path.

During early 1930 Mānekji Sheth had been to Āshram. Before leaving he saw Prabhushri and told him that he was going to Indore. By virtue of his wholesome Karma Prabhushri lent him the unique teaching at that time. Mānekji remained so concentrated that he lost sight of the train timings. When Prabhushri pointed out that the train had left, he simply uttered, 'The train that had left would come back, but this body would not be regained.' Thereafter Prabhushri gave him the instructions that were destined to be the last, and Mānekji Sheth went to Indore by another train.

The next month he became seriously ill. That time a liberation-seeker went to see him. Mānekji Sheth told him, "I am going to face a mortal event this year and may not survive. Please stay with me and chant Smaran-Mantra to me. Even if I become unconscious, please continue to chant. Leave aside everything else and please do this much."

He had also called his relatives and the liberation-seekers roundabout and had atoned for his faults. In the afternoon of the eighth day of the dark half of the month of Mahā (About February) he himself wrote a telegram to the Āshram praying for the blessing and shelter forever. Prabhushri replied by telegram, 'The soul does not die; Mantra covers everything; stay tuned to it; Brahmachārijee is coming there.' As Mānekji read it, he was much pleased. Meanwhile the liberation-seeker by his side continued to chant the Mantra. The pious soul of Mānekji remained alert and concentrated. He gained unique quietude and his soul left the body at 11.00 P.M.

Since Prabhushri had stayed at the place of Mānekji Sheth at Poona, the religious orientation that the latter had gained had continued to rise. He remained at the service of Prabhushri physically, mentally as well as financially, and had left no stone unturned in that respect. He was imbibed with many adorable virtues like straightforwardness, generosity, humility, compassion, affection etc. Moreover, he had firm faith in the directives of Graceful Lord and the willingness to sacrifice everything for the sake of Āshram.

By about the end of 1930 Ravjibhāi Kothāri breathed his last in Āshram with total quietude. That was a very rare and unique event. Only those, who have earned very wholesome Karma, can gain the favorable circumstances that he had at the time of death. It was the wholesome place of retreat and the liberation-seekers of the Āshram had a high sense of regard for the departing soul. In order to atone for the sins Kshamāpanā (Lesson of Atonement), Pratikraman (Other Sutras of Atonement), 20 lyrics of humility, etc. were recited to him for a couple of days prior to the death; Atmasiddhi (Self-Realization), Apoorva Avasar (Unprecedented Occasion) etc. were recited by his bedside for maintaining Self-awareness, which he could maintain up to the end. Chanting of SmaranMantra was continuing for the rest of time.

Prabhushri used to come to see him a couple of times every day in order to provide him the benefit of contact. His soul was highly delighted when Prabhushri came there and he used to say, 'I have been waging war against the situation-conferring Karma. On one side is the self-awareness and on the other stays the situation. In order to maintain awareness in the situation I am seeking the shelter of the great men like Gajsukumār Muni.'

On the last day prior to his departure when Muni Mohanlālji came to see him at 3.00 P.M., Ravjibhāi was asleep. As he woke up, he got up and bowed to Mohanlālji. Then he asked for removing the screen across the portrait of Graceful Lord in the cabinet facing him and bowed to it. Thereupon Mohanlālji said, 'One needs to firmly stay at his shelter; the well being lies in maintaining faith in him.' Thereafter he recited the stanzas of 'Fast unto Death' and 'Four Shelters' and then began to read to him the last letter addressed by the Graceful Lord to Saubhāgyabhāi.

By that time Ravjibhāi had retained the consciousness; there was no sign of imminent death and he was carefully listening to the letter. Meanwhile Prabhushri arrived there. Ravjibhāi was highly delighted to see him. Pointing his finger towards the portrait and to Prabhushri he showed that he had the Graceful Lord at heart as indicated by Prabhushri. The latter also said that it was the only thing to be kept in mind.

After the letter was finished Prabhushri showered the unique teaching for maintaining the distinction between the soul and body and to patiently bear the situation as mentioned in ‘Samādhishatak’. After conferring unique awareness to him as Prabhushri left, Ravjibhāi told his wife that something marvelous had happened and left the body within five minutes.

The death in such quietude occurs by virtue of much wholesome Karma. Those, who had remained in contact with him and those, who had witnessed the end, should be considered fortunate. That death had deep impression on all those, who were residing in Āshram. They said that they had not witnessed such scene before. The impression that they had gained was to stay with them for long. It is hard to accurately describe the significance thereof; it was identical to a dumb’ tasting sugar.

During August 1932 Muni Mohanlālji got a mortal disease. Prabhushri used to go to him frequently and lend the teaching that could lead to unique awareness. Mohanlālji was getting intense pain, but he could bear it patiently by virtue of Prabhushri’s teaching. Once Prabhushri came out after conferring the awareness and said that the internal state of Mohanlālji had gone up very high; if he survived, he could be of much help to the people. Mohanlālji left eight days thereafter on September 6.

He was one of the seven monks, who had resorted to the Graceful Lord. While initially being instrumental in guiding the truth-seekers towards the right path, he had been of great help to the liberation-seekers. He was celibate for the entire life, and had stayed in obedience to Prabhushri since the beginning of Āshram. His exclusive faith, trust, devotion and loyalty to the Graceful Lord as well as his simplicity, absolute state and such other virtues are worth remembering. His obligation upon the Āshram and upon the liberation-seekers is also worth remembering. He had been a great support to Prabhushri in his old age.

20

Muni Mohanlālji was straightforward and had a very praiseworthy approach. He had addressed several letters to liberation-seekers in order to turn them towards the right path. Prabhushri had recommended some liberation-seekers to memorize the following letter.

Tat Aum Tat

Shrimad Rajchandra Āshram, Agās

My repeated Obeisance with intense devotion be to the true Guide, the conferor of unique refuge.

Tin Bhuvan Choodā Ratan, Sam Shri Jinake Pāy;  
Namat Pāyie Āp Pad, Sab Vidhi Bandh Nashāy

Feet of the Lord are like the most precious jewels of all the three worlds;  
Kneeling to them leads to self-realization and destroys all types of bondage.

Jnāni Ke Ajnāni Jan, Sukh Duhkh Rahit Na Koi; Jnāni Vede Dhairyathi, Ajnāni Vede Roi.

The enlightened as well as unenlightened are not devoid of happiness and unhappiness; the former bear it with patience, while the latter do that while crying.

The purified fraternal one,

This soul has been wandering within the four states of existence since the infinity. During that wandering it has mostly borne misery. By virtue of its identification with the body it feels afflicted and/or indulges in aversion while bearing the same. Thereby it acquires Karma, which would lead to the infinitely greater affliction than what it undergoes now. On account of its delusion it has been begging for worldly pleasure and comforts. It wants to get happiness, but it acquires infinite molecules of Karmic matter by indulges in wrong modes, by developing attachment for the objects of senses and by cultivating the sense of belonging for wealth etc.

It has never come in contact with a true Guru, and in case it has come across, it has not resorted to his commands without harboring any doubt; otherwise it would not have any reason to get such affliction. If it correctly understands now, observes equanimity in the situation arising out of the operative Karma, and continually resorts with supreme devotion to the Smaran-Mantra conferred by the Saint, it can attain the quiet state devoid of all Karmas. Bondage of Karma arises by one's own mode. Whatever mode one resorts to in the circumstances arising from time to time leads to the relevant Karma, which extends appropriate consequences at the right time. Thus treating every situation as own creation a discriminating liberation-seeker maintains equanimity in the situations that arise at different times. Equanimity leads to the supreme bliss, to the Karmaless state. Since you are a discerning person, it is not necessary to write more about it.

Forsaking the bodily sense one should therefore contemplate about the soul to the extent possible and firmly think as if the world does not exist. Spouse, family members, other relations and friends have been pursuing their own interests. Every soul has been related to us on infinite occasions in the form of spouse, child, brother etc. In what form is it worth developing attachment to any of them? Your well being lies in firmly thinking over it, in maintaining equanimity towards every being, and keeping the mind continually in contemplation of 'Sahajātma Swaroop'. That will lead to destruction or pacification of all Karmas and you would experience the unique peace. That is my understanding and I think, every enlightened one, true Guru and others have understood it that way. Many souls have crossed over, will cross over and are at present crossing over the unfathomable worldly sea thereby.

We also have to cross over that very way. Particularly those, who have seen the enlightened being or who have had his teaching, should give up all sorts of delusion, should be objective in every sort of connection, and behave as if the world does not exist. If it is necessary to give opinion in any worldly matter, one should do it clearly and resort again to his true nature. Everything that occurs is dreamlike and one should merely observe it. He should contemplate, 'I have held such embodiments on infinite occasions. By identifying myself with it and remaining engrossed therein I have generated the unending worldly life; now I need to remain absorbed in my true nature.'

Soul is connectionless pure consciousness; it is merely an observer, knower and spectator of all other modes. Other substances have never been ours; out of delusion we treat them as ours. By virtue of the contact with true Guru now we need to think that the nature consists of infinite knowledge, infinite perception, infinite character and infinite vigor. One should continually keep in mind that four-fold nature, should not indulge in any fancy. All fancies should be subsided as soon as they arise and the mind should be concentrated in the above-mentioned contemplation of 'Sahajātmaswaroop'.

Worldly life is an illusion and merely comes to the eye like a mirage. This soul has infinitely wandered in four states of existence and in 8.4 million species. Identifying itself with every state it has been born into, it has indulged in craving for the same. As the earlier embodiments did not belong to it, so does not the present one. This eternal soul has come here alone by virtue of its Karma, is going to bear the consequences alone and is going to leave alone. It has generated this unending worldly life by identifying itself with the spouse, children etc. and by cultivating acute attachment for the same. It has acquired unwholesome Karma thereby and it will have to bear the consequences thereof in future.

Now the present physical faculties should be used for continual contemplation of soul. One should particularly ponder over 12 modes of reflections like impermanence etc. If one is not able to read about it, he should ask some one else to read so as to ponder over the same. If that is also not possible, one should remain absorbed in chanting the Mantra. Treating all other aspects dreamlike one should forsake the same and maintain the tendency in chanting.

Shrimad's portrait. That time many people could take the benefit of his contact, teaching and devotion. After the installation Prabhushri had stayed for two months in a building outside Navsāri. Quite a few people could take the advantage of his presence there. During the next summer he had stayed in Āthawā Lines, Surat for a month and a half. Thereafter he had been at Chānod for about a week and came back to Āshram after visiting the river-island Vyās.

The liberation-seeker Hirālāl Shāh had constructed a building in Ellisbridge area of Ahmedabad and had been urging Prabhushri for installing of Shrimad's portrait there. The latter, however, used to say that it would be done in course of time. During that time Dr. Shārdāben Pundit of Ahmedabad used to come to Āshram to take advantage of Prabhushri. Her brother, who was not much religion-oriented, noticed the change in her life under the influence of Prabhuji. Impressed thereby he said to her by the end of 1934 that he wanted to accompany her on the succeeding Friday. Shārdāben was pleased to hear that and agreed to take him to Āshram

It was, however destined otherwise. Mr. Pundit came under the impact of pneumonia and got bed-ridden. He was therefore feeling sad for his inability to go to Āshram. Meanwhile Prabhushri asked Hirālāl to plan for installation of the portrait during that week-end. Hirālāl was pleased to hear that. He invited all the liberation-seekers to arrive at his place on Saturday and proceeded to Ahmedabad for making necessary arrangements.

Accordingly Prabhushri arrived at Ahmedabad along with hundred liberation-seekers and the installation ceremony of Shrimad's portrait took place with much pomp. After the lunch Prabhushri went to Pundit's home along with a few liberation-seekers. Then the people came to know that the great man had been there to take care of the lucky sick man.

When Prabhushri reached the bedside, Mr. Pundit was feeling uneasy due to fever. As Shārdāben told him that Prabhushri had arrived, he felt very happy; he folded his hands and bowed to him in gratitude. Then Prabhushri virtually showered wholesome teaching upon him. Citing the illustration of king Shrenik he said that Shrenik was an aborigine in the previous life. That time he had taken the vow of averting crow-meat under the directive of an enlightened monk. Since he strictly observed the vow, he was born as Shrenik and would be liberated from the worldly cycle after taking one more birth.

Mr. Pundit was overjoyed to learn about such wholesome consequence of resorting to the directive of the enlightened. Looking to his keenness for spiritual well being, Prabhushri gave him the vow of avoiding seven non-eatable articles of food and conferring the Smaran-Manta he explained the distinction between the soul and the body. Thus he lent unique awareness and guided him towards the death in quietude.

While returning from the place Prabhushri asked a few liberation-seekers to stay there for reciting Ātmasiddhi etc. As they continued to chant the enlightening words close to the ears, the soul of Mr. Pundit remained concentrated therein. Contemplating that the disease, death etc. pertain to the body, while the soul is 'pure, enlightened, consciousness incarnate, self radiant and abode of bliss', he got absorbed within the Self. With such wholesome contemplation he left the body at night and gained unique well being.

From Ahmedabad Prabhushri went to Surendranagar along with a few liberation-seekers. There he stayed for a few days in the building of Jesingbhāi Sheth and gave the benefit of contact to many people. Then he went to Vānkāner at the instance of Vanechand Devjibhāi, and thereafter he went to Vavāniā, the birth place of Shrimad. There he performed devotional worship and then returned to Agās via Vānkāner.

During the spring of 1935 Prabhushri went to Mt. Ābu and stayed there for about three months in Shabari Building rented by Hirālāl Shah. During that period he had been to Āhor for eleven days and directed many people towards the true path. While at Mt. Ābu, he frequently used to go to Delwādā temples and perform Chaityavandan (Devotional prayer), etc. For eight days he had stayed in Achalgadh and had performed there Ātmasiddhi Poojan.

The then ruling princes of Limdi, Jasdan, Sānand etc. and Prabhāshankar Pattani, the Diwān (Chief minister) of Bhāvanagar used to frequently come to Ābu in order to see him, and listen to his teaching at length. They thus became instrumental in bringing out the wonderful teaching. At the instance of the prince of Limdi Prabhushri had also elaborated the meanings of Ātmasiddhishāstra.

During the last ten days Prabhushri used to move among the hills, caves and woods in various directions of Äbu. As the liberation-seekers followed him, there used to take place unique devotional worship. Once they had been to Anädarä Point. There Prabhushri started reciting ‘Mool Märag Sämbhalo Jinano Re’ (Listen to the original path of the omniscient Lords) and all others had followed while going around him. Marvelous devotional worship had thus taken place. On the way back Prabhushri had asked them to chant Mantra-Smaran or recite ‘Shuddhatä Vichäre Dhyäve’ (Think and ponder over the purity)

Such devotional worship also used to take place at Arbudädevi, Sunset Point, Cross Point, Dedkisheelä near Rämkind, Traver Lake, Pändav Cave, Vasishtha Äshram etc. That was carried on for hours and everyone stayed excited under its impact. Once while Ätmasiddhi Poojan was being performed at Vasishtha Äshram, Prabhushri got exhilarated and spoke out:

“Koi Mädhav Lo, Hän Re Koi Mädhav Lo. Mädhavne Matukimän Ghäli, Gopijan Latake Chäli;  
Hän Re Koi Mädhav Lo, Achal Preme Mädhav Lo.”

(Get the Lord, please get the Lord. Placing the Lord in the pot the cowgirl gracefully calls, ‘we are dealing in the Lord, please get the same.’)

Then he said, “It was wonderful devotion; Nirjarä (Eradication of Karma) also occurred. Did we have the affection, affection towards the Soul? That needs to be done.” When they reached the camp, he asked everyone, “What did you notice there? Did you desire anything? Did you see soul? Did you visualize it?”

After staying at Mt Äbu for three months, Prabhushri went to Siddhapur Äshram of Ratnaräjshri for a couple of days and then returned to Agäs.

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The physical condition of Prabhushri deteriorated from the full moon day of Month of Mahä, Samvat 1992 (By the end of winter 1936). Doctors advised him to take complete rest; hence seeing, teaching, contacting etc. came to a close, though arrangements were later made to see him once during the day. Once Jesingbhäi said, ‘My Lord, the children can get the presents, while we have to miss the same.’ Prabhushri raised his hand and signaled that it is continuing. Then he said, “Everyone, young as well as old constitutes the soul; we need to see soul everywhere; one should have its impact; but who listens? Who gives attention? Whom to say? It is necessary to say to some selective few.”

In spite of poor health he had been to Näsik for a week by virtue of Karma or for the sake of a change and had come back on the ninth day of the month of Chaitra (About the month of April). By setting Agäs Äshram he had given concrete shape to the path resurrected by the Graceful Lord. As if that signaled the end of his mission, he gave the following instruction by way of entrustment ten days after his arrival.

“All this pertains to Äshram. Choonibhäi, Manibhäi, ‘Let there be croutons in the soup’. Shall I say Manibhäi? Brahmachäri after much time...I have nothing to say so long as this body lasts, but main entrusting relates to Brahmachäri. (To Brahmachäriji) ‘Go to the portrait of Graceful Lord; after going round if one comes for Smaran-Mantra, that should be seriously looked into, his objective should be examined; if it is worth, the vow should be given to resort to commands of the Graceful Lord.’”

Whilespecifying the same thing to Brahmachärijee personally his detachment, disentanglement etc. were evident from his facial features, signaling of eyes etc. It seemed as if he was not speaking, yet the people had been listening the divine voice, “Confer Smaran-Mantra, ask to recite 20 lyrics, Yam-Niyam, Kshamäpanä and to avoid seven addictions as well as seven non-eatables; I entrust the religion to you.”

The next day he said, “For soul this is the festival of death, death itself is a festival.”

Vishwabhäv Vyäpi Tadapi, Ek Vimal Chidroop;

Jnānānand Maheshwarā, Jayavantā Jin Bhoop.

(The great omniscient Lords imbibed with enlightened pleasure stay victorious.  
By pervading the universe in the form of enlightenment they personify pure consciousness.)

His motto was, “Only the soul, nothing else; its festival, the festival of Death.

“Choonibhāi, Manibhāi, Sobhāgbhāi, Parikh, Vanechand, we have instituted the Center of Graceful Lord. Soul is the religion; let us abide by the directives of Graceful Lord. Take Brahmachāri also. Take others if you think fit. The Graceful Lord has commanded: Ānāe Dhammo, Ānāe Tavo’. That is the original path. We should believe in surrendering to the Graceful Lord. There is nothing beyond what he had said.

“This (body) is a composition, not the soul; the composition gets decomposed. ... Hirābhāi Zaveri is also to be inducted. He holds the Graceful Lord at heart, he has faith in him. Now let me rest; I am forgiving. There is nothing else but the soul. The Graceful Lord had said that this monk (Prabhushri) will attain death in quietude like Saubhāgyabhāi. I am now aware of the soul that Saubhāgyabhāi had been aware of. I do not care for anything else. I keep faith in Graceful Lord, all the rest is lifeless, the packet of ash; that is to be discarded.... All those who have Graceful Lord in mind will get the bliss; it is the faith that matters, whether high or low. The life of those, who tread on the path of Graceful Lord, will be fulfilled. How does it matter, if there be millions of others?”

On the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Vaishākh (About May) after performing Devvandan as usual, he asked Āshram’s inmates to recite Apoorva Avasar (Unprecedented Occasion) song. As the highly contemplative song composed by the Graceful Lord came to the end, the pious soul of the great man got absorbed in ecstasy; leaving his mortal remains, he proceeded towards the immortal abode. Infinite obeisance to the sacred feet of the blessed Holiness as well as to the divine eternal path of liberation indicated by him!

While remaining the lively spirit of Āshram from 1920 to 1936 Prabhushri made it the unique abode of devotion, wholesome contact and spiritual pursuit. Thereby he turned thousands of people towards the path of liberation. While listening to what he had said from time to time for the well being of liberation-seekers, those residing by his side had taken notes to the extent possible. Those notes have been compiled and published in Updeshāmṛut.

He mostly stayed in inner mode since gaining Self-realization through Gurushri Shrimad Rajchandrs, the enlightenment incarnate, resurrector of eternal path of detachment and the symbol of spiritualism. His later life in the Āshram was characterized with incessant teaching of truth and intense devotion to the Supreme Being while holding exclusive faith in Shrimad. He had asked every liberation-seeker coming in his contact to resort to the true path and gain realization. That is worth being remembered and resorted to by everyone.

Gujarat has produced several torch-bearers for the sake of spiritual development of the people. The names of Lord Nemināth, Rājimati, ShriKrishna, Hemchandrāchārya, Ānandghanji, Yashovijayji, Devchandji and Chidānandji are foremost among them. Their spiritualized states have left the message of peace, happiness and ultimate bliss to the world. Many deserving beings are turning towards the eternal path by drinking the water from their ambrosial streams.

By devoting their lives in attainment of the supreme state, Shrimad Rajchandra and Laghurājswāmi have secured unique places in the line of those torch-bearers and have left invaluable heritage to the mankind. Let our humble and repeated obeisance be to such great men; let their ascetic force lead to the universal bliss.

## ***In Adoration***

Aho Ātmārāmi, Munivar Laghurāj Prabhushri, Krupāluni Ājnā Ur Dahri Kar Vyakta Shivashri;  
Tame Udhhāryā Ā Dusham Kalikāle Jan Bahu, Krupā Sindhu Vandu, Swaroop-Anubhuti-Sthiti Chahun.

Oh Self-realized Muni, Laghurājswāmi, you manifested the bliss by resorting to the directives of Graceful Lord; in this hard time you resurrected many people. Sea of compassion, I wish to experience the true state.



Krupälini Äjnä Muj Ur Vishe Nishchal Raho, Guru Jnāniyoge Bhavjal Tano Ant Zat Ho;  
Sadā Sevi Enā Vimal Vachanāmrut Rutane, Sadānande Majna Bhaju Hun Sahajātmaswaroopane.

Let the commands of Graceful Lord stay forever upon me; let me soon reach the end of worldly sea by virtue of contacting the enlightened Guru; let me stay within Self-delight by continually resorting to his pure words of Truth.

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Shri Rajchandra Guruvaryatanā Pratāpe, Adhyātmajnān Pragatāvi Prabhushri Äpe,  
Varshāvi Bodhatani Amrutvrushti Ä Je, Thāo Mumukshujanane Shivsaukhya Käje.

Lord, you manifested the Realization by virtue of the great Guru Shrimad Rajchandra; let the shower of your ambrosial teaching be helpful to liberation-seekers in attaining the bliss of liberation.

Je Bhavya Ä Jivan Jnānitanun Sunine, Sambhālashe Sahaj-Ätmaswaroop-Shreene;  
Sansār-Sāgar Apār Tari Jashe Te, Shānti Samādhi Sukh Shāshvat Pāmashe Te.

By listening to this biography of the enlightened, those deserving ones, who look for the innate wealth of Self, will cross over the unfathomable sea of worldly life and attain the peaceful, eternal, ecstatic bliss.