

## 26. Udarcheta Mooni Shri Nyaya Vijayaji

### Introduction and Birth:

There is a village named Mandal in Saurashtra region of Gujarat State in Western India. It is a place of pilgrimage, a place of education and a place of trade. The famous king Vanraj Chavda had built a fort of stones at this place and Siddhraj Solanki as well as Bhimnath had contributed for its development. Shri Hakkasooriji had said in 1280 that it was one of the six most important places of worship in Gujarat. The plan of establishing Shri Yashovijayaji Sanskrit Pathshala at Benaras was made out in this village. (A school for religious learning) and the most well known Shrut Abhyasi (the one who studies by hearing) Shri Jambu Vijayaji Maharaj has also been from this place. Many Jain followers and students have lived here since many centuries. An ardent religious-minded and highly cultured couple, Shri Chhagalal Vakhatchand and Diwalibai were residing here and a son was born to them in 1896. Since this was the first child to the couple, all the members of the family were much pleased. The child was healthy and charming and hence he was named as Narsinh.

There was a government school at Mandal some 90 years ago but Narsinh was put up to a private school of one Shri Pandya for learning. The clever boy Narsinh completed his study up to the fourth standard in a very short period. He was loved by all the teachers and students in the school as he was of mixing and co-operative nature. There were no facilities for study in English and hence the education of Narsinh came to an end here as the parents were not willing to send him to an outside place for study.

### Study and Inspiration for Progress:

Jain mendicant Shri DharmVijayaji happened to be in Mandal in 1902. He was deeply learned in Jain studies and Jain scriptures. Narsinh was one in a large congregation hearing the preachings of Shri DharmVijayaji. There was immediate donation of Rs. 20,000 for expansion of religious activities. Shri DharmVijayaji advised the young boys to study Jainism and become master in it. There was magical effect of the preachings of DharmVijayaji and a Pathshala-school for religious study was started in the bungalow of one Shri Navalakha. Pandit Shri Bechardasji was appointed as the teacher and 15-20 students enrolled for admission at once. Narsinh was one of these students. Mooni Shri DharmVijayaji was a man of foresightedness and he thought that this school needed be shifted to Benaras if highly educated persons were to be created from the school so that advanced study in various subjects might be available in Mooni Shri started for Benaras alongwith the students. This was a difficult task as the road was very long, full of many troubles and there were difficulties to get food on the way also. Even then all could reach Benaras because of their determination and faith. The Brahmin teachers here were not willing to teach the Jain students in the beginning but the problem was solved by the efficient and tactful efforts of Shri DharmVijayaji. The students then began to study in religion, languages, grammar, Nyaya (religious logic) and other subjects very regularly. Narsinh came to meet his parents in holidays, and the parents started to talk of the marriage of Narsinh who was their only son. Narsinh, however, was not prepared to accept this binding for the present. It was destiny that the parents expired before the marriage of Narsinh could be settled. Narsinh then asked the consent of his Uncle Popatlal Vakhatchand to go to Palitana and on receiving his consent; he went to Benaras instead of to Palitana. He met his old friends and teachers. He thought that his hopes would not come true.

It was very difficult to prosecute study at the Pathshala at Benaras. There was no permanent fund of money with the Pathshala and the question of arrangements for food of about 30 students of the Pathshala became serious. Students soon realized the anxiety of the teacher and they offered all

their ornaments to the teacher to come out of this trouble. Seeing such a great sacrifice of the students, the teacher had tears of gratitude in his eyes.

The teacher started for the pilgrimage of SametShikhar with all his students and they reached Calcutta in 1907. The Jain Sangh of Calcutta welcomed the great teacher and students and big fund of money could soon be collected for the Pathshala at Benaras.

### **Dixa:**

The great teacher delivered preaching lectures in Upashrayas and other public meetings. He preached 12 Bhavna (commands) to the students also at times; and five students were ready to adopt Dixa because of these preachings. These were (1) Narsinh of Mandal, (2) Magan of Kheda, (3) Mafat of Dasada, (4) Saubhagyachand of Radhanpur and (5) Bechar of Dehgam. The Dixa rites were performed for these five students on the fifth day of the dark half of Chaitra in 1907 in the presence of thousands of persons with great celebration. They were respectively named as NyayaVijayaji, MrugendraVijayaji, MahendraVijayaji, SinhVijayaji and VidyaVijayaji. They completed their monsoon at Calcutta and then started for further movement in 1908. They came to the holy place of Pavapuri where the great Lord Mahavir had left his mortal body. They had passed through Nadiya, Murshidabad, Baluchar and Ajimganj. The atmosphere here was quite suitable for penance and study and hence the teacher thought to establish a religious school (Gurukul), but at that time he received a message that he was urgently required at Benaras.

The newly turned mendicants were granted regular and formal Dixa here with large-scale celebrations and then the group started for Benaras. When these new mendicants and the great teacher entered the town Kashi in 1908, the king welcomed them with elephants, horsemen, large musical band, and thousands of men and women. The people shouted, "Jain Pathshala shall be renovated, the great teacher has returned" with great joy. Newly Dixit Shri NyayaVijayaji now started his studies very seriously.

### **Making of Literature:**

NyayaVijayaji was very clever and unusually intelligent. During the four monsoons from 1908 to 1911 he achieved mastery on Sanskrit language and many religious scriptures. He was especially interested in Nyaya (Philosophical logic) and hence he appeared at the examinations of Nyaya Tirth and Nyaya Visharad held by the Calcutta University and secured brilliant success. All the teachers, students and other people were extremely pleased of this extra-ordinary success of their student.

### **Hold Over Sanskrit:**

NyayaVijayaji had so much hold over Sanskrit that he composes poems in Sanskrit instantaneously and delivered lectures for hours together. The learned personality Fatehchand Belani has noted that there was not such great-learned man in Sanskrit after Shri NyayaVijayaji. His learning was total and it was evident from the books Adhyatma Tattvalok and Nyaya Kusumanjali at the age of only 25. The famous Pandit Shri Mahavirprasad Dwivedi was extremely pleased to read the first book and it is clearly seen in his letter written to Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji. The Brahmins of Nagpur and Ujjain had awarded him a Certificate of Merit in which it was written, "Kim Ashwaghoshah, Kimu Katidasah" which means that Shri NyayaVijayaji was as great writer as Ashwaghosh and Kalidas.

### **Writing of the Great Book on Jain Darshan:**

He felt at the age of only 28, the need to write an exhaustive book in Gujarati in which there may be all-around knowledge about Jainism and in the beginning only a few chapters were prepared but since this book was selected as a text book in various institutions of learning it was necessary to make it all-inclusive and exhaustive. Mooni Shri worked hard for it and then this great book of 500 pages came

out. It became so much popular that its 11 editions in Gujarati, two in Hindi and one in English were published. This book was highly appreciated by many learned persons and known mendicants. Mooni Shri PunyaVijayaji who was a famous editor of Jain scriptures wrote the preface of the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of this book. This great book was completed during the monsoon at Jamnagar in 1918 and it has immortalized Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji.

### **Nationalist and Reformatory Approach:**

Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji studied deeply the Indian literature and hence his views were advanced and liberal. He was much concerned about social conditions and national problems of his time. Many non-Jains came to him in his meetings and young boys and girls also heard him with interest. The monsoon of 1931 was spent in Mumbai and he had many memorable incidents during this time. He was strong supporter of wearing hand-woven cotton clothes, simplicity and bringing up low and medium classes of people. He himself was wearing hand-woven cotton clothes and advised his disciples and followers also to wear such cloth. He preached in favor of this. He always opposed silk-clothes and said that just you behave well for your food, so you must adopt good behavior in wearing clothes also.

The birthday of his great teacher Acharya Vijaya DharmSooriji was celebrated in Fort area of Mumbai in 1931 under the Presidentship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on large scale celebrations. The great deeds in the fields of Jain literature, Jain community, non-violence, avoiding meat-eating etc. done by Acharya Shri Vijaya DharmSooriji on all India level were highly praised by all in these celebrations. At the end of the celebrations, the sale of hand-woven cotton cloth came to be of about Rs. 5,000.

But a large section of the society could not approve the reformatory, revolutionary, truth-telling and compromising thoughts of Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji and as such he had to spend about 26 monsoons after the views of Mooni Shree with real and co-operated with him in his activities of making literature.

### **Monsoons at Vadodara:**

He passed three monsoons of 1929, 1932 and 1933 at Vadodara. He could impress Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwar with his deep learnedness, national thinking and outstanding ability to speak. He could get opportunity to express his clear and strong ideas on Child-Dixa, hand-woven cotton cloth eradication of Untouchability etc. When public opinion was sought on the regulation about Child-Dixa, all the Sanghs except those of Vijaya DharmSooriji and Vijaya Vallabh Sooriji had objected this regulation very strongly. But then the Jain Shwetambar Conference, Jain Yuvak Mandal, Pandit Sukhlalji, Shri JinVijayaji, Shri Mahasukhbhai, Shri Mohanbhai Vakil of Padra and other prominent persons had supported such a regulation. The Shree Sangh of Bhavnagar and Atmanand Jain Sabha of Lahore had also supported this regulation and at last the bill was adopted. Thus, Child-Dixa was prohibited in Vadodara State.

In the work of expanding use of hand-woven cotton cloth, i.e. Khadi, Shri Manilal Kothari and other prominent persons of the society supported Mooni Shri. They had advised to use Khadi on religious occasions. Maharaj Shree was kind towards neglected and untouchable people in the society and hence he had arranged for combined dinner party of higher and lower class people including Harijans, neglected class of persons and untouchables in the Harijan Vas, (locality where lower class people etc. are residing) near the Sarasiya Pond. In this way, the desire of the great Lord Mahavir to consider all the souls to be equal was fulfilled with the efforts of Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji.

### **Last Days:**

Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji was of 69 years of age in 1959 and he was feeling very weak. In his last sickness, his ardent devotee Shri Ratilal Mafatbhai had pressing asked him to go for change of air and atmosphere but Mooniji had strongly objected to it and Shri Ratilalbhai had to beg his pardon. He

had attack to paralysis in 1959 while he was moving on a terrace. He was peaceful even in this painful condition. A specialist doctor was called for but it could not help much. It was, therefore, decided to take him to Ahmedabad in the morning next day. But before this could be done, he breathed his last at 10-00 hours that night. Hearing his sickness, many people rushed to see him from various villages and towns. As soon as it was known that he was no more, all the shops and markets were closed. His coffin was brought to the premises of Panjrapol at Mandal Mahajan (a place where disabled animals are kept and maintained) at 2-30 hours noon and then funeral took place in the presence of thousands of his devotees. The people of Mandal Village remember him even today for his immortal deeds.

## **His Literature and Preaching:**

Maharaj Shri has created vast literature. He wrote 17 books in Gujarati, 24 in Sanskrit, 6 in Hindi, 10 in English and 1 in Prakrit (Total: 58). In his book titled "Kalyan Bharti" written by him in his advanced age, he explained the Jain principles in simple language even though he was highly learned and in addition to this, he presented almost all Indian culture by keeping himself unprejudiced by Jainism even though he was an arch Jain. There were about five hundred stanzas in the book. He has given Adhyatma Tattvalok, Atma Tattva Prakash, Maha Manav Mahavir and Nyaya Kusumanjali in addition to Jain Darshan and Kalyan Bharti. All these are considered to be the books of very high philosophical level.

## **His Preachings:**

- It is necessary to do the work of Social, National and Religious regeneration by unions or collectively. Celibacy and renunciation are indispensable virtues for doing this work. Leave away your weakness of mind, stand and awake. Jump with courage in the field of action, and God will be at your help. You will be able to wear the garland of victory and bravery.
- Woman is the mother of nature. Her ignorance is curse on society development of children depends mainly on mothers. If they are given education in common behavior, languages, home management, child-care, virtues, simplicity, courage, wisdom, service to others, lover for family etc., they will produce Saints, mendicants, spiritual personalities, brave warriors, brave women and respectful personalities.
- When lacs of the people of over country are suffering from hunger, it is not fair to spend money for dinner parties.
- What is wrong if the virtues connected with Dixa are first well taught to the aspirant of Dixa? He must first be tested and then only granted Dixa at an appropriate age and time. The series of lectures of mendicants must be the series of education. This will create good thoughts to those who hear the lectures. The audience will be aware of their duties and responsibilities, evil practices in the society, will be discarded, and the discrimination between Jains and non-Jains will disappear. He believed that the speeches of Jain mendicants must be encouraging and highly thoughtful.
- We have to purify our life with the encouraging and highly thoughtful. Tirthankars were totally detached with the world, above love and hate, they were omniscient and were able to show us the way to salvation-Moksha. There cannot be Anti-religious practice of decorating or respecting the idol-on the meditating idol of the great Lords Tirthankars.

## **His Inspiring Personality**

- Devotion of Vaishnavas: Those who have acquired right sense will consider all religious and scriptures to be equally good. It was only for this liberal and clean thinking to maintain equal consideration for all religious that non-Jains and Vaishnavas were attracted to him. These communities also served him much and Maharaj Shri had passed three monsoons consecutively with them.

- Hold over languages: His speech was sweet, simple and effective even though it was regional. His words had a unique force. Bright words were always on his tongue. His words revealed his high thinking and struck directly on heart. Even the learned persons were astonished with his speech.
- Liberal like a Sea: He strongly believed in secularism. He treated all religions to be equal. We can hardly see such thinking in any Jain. He held many gods in his worldly activities also. (Anekantvad)
- Detachment: He never longed for disciples. He has never been worried for preservation of his literature-works after his death. He was always pleased in his own self. He had nothing like personal interest in anything.
- Liking for loneliness: He lived almost secluded life in his last 15-20 years. He usually read scriptures and thought on that in depth. He lived peacefully throughout his life.

Once the great saint Agam Prabhakar (one who has deep study of scriptures). Shri Punya Vijayaji Maharaj was to go to Patan via Sankheshwar. He was eager to see Shri NyayaVijayaji as he considered it to be a great pilgrimage to go to see him. When such a great saint himself came to see Shri NyayaVijayaji, it spoke of the greatness of both the saints. It was an extremely joyful event inspiring the people to be devoted to religion.

### **A Place of Meeting of Saints:**

Many learned persons came to discuss spiritual matters with Maharaj Shri NyayaVijayaji and among them were Mooni Shri JinVijayaji, Pragnachakshu Pandit Sukhlalji, Shri Parmanand Kapadia, Mooni Shri Santbalji, Shri Vimla Thakar. Swamy Shri Satyanandi who was the principal disciple of Swamy Shri Shivanandji Maharaj of Haridwar-Hrishikesh, Swamy Shri Chaitnyanandji, Swamy Shri Premanandji and many other including intellectuals from all walks of life.

One more bright person of Mandal, Mahant Shri Shantiprasadji also came to see Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji. The people of Mandal were extremely surprised to hear their discourses in Sanskrit.

Whenever the famous and highly learned Mooni Shri JambuVijayaji came to Shankheshwar, he used to come alone to see Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji. This was a long journey of thirty-six miles. He was then turning back after holding detailed discussions with Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji on various subjects. This indicated his deep devotion and love for Mooni Shri NyayaVijayaji.