



GOLDEN STEPS TO SALVATION

ACHARYA PADMASAGARSURI

नमामि वीरम् गिरिसारधीरम्

GOLDEN STEPS TO SALVATION

Discourses

by

ACHARYASHRI PADMASAGAR SOORIJI

The English Version

by

K. RAMAPPA M.A., B.ED.

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PRASHANTMOORTI
ACHARY SHREE KAILAS SAGAR SOOREESWARAJI



SHASAN PRABHAVAK
ACHARY SHREE PADMASAGAR SOORESWARAJI

The Dedication

This is a presentation
to all the souls, that, in the blindness
caused by infatuation,
keep wandering through the wilderness
of samsar; but who have the aspiration
to pursue the path of spiritual elevation,
and to attain the supreme state of salvation.

—Padmasagar

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Shri Rikhabchandji Khumaji Sakaria has started business activities since 1974. He was a cancer patient in 1984, but by the Grace of God it has been cured now. Thereafter he has performed two Upadhan Tap and Sangh Yatra pilgrimage of about 500 persons for six days to Nakodaji, Jaisalmer and Abuji, on his own accord. He also joined sangh yatra to Satrunjaya on foot for 1½ months. He is having five sons and two daughters, with total 15 grandsons and grand - daughters. Recently in the Prathistha Mahotsav of Lord Chandraprabhuji in Madras he took advantage of Navakarshi Jaman to all.

MOGIBAI - She has performed all the three Upadhan Tap and also Varshitap. She is religious minded even from her childhood and has complete faith in the religion to the extent that whatever may be the difficulty in life. She performs religious rites with full trust. She takes active interest in religious matters alongwith her husband and other family members.

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A FOREWORD BY THE AUTHOR

The destruction of Moha or infatuation leads to supreme knowledge; and supreme knowledge leads to salvation; therefore, the destruction of Moha is the seed of salvation. Moksha or salvation; Kshaya or destruction; the first letters of these two words make up the word Moksha showing thereby, the causal relationship between *Moha* and *Kshaya* and between the *Kshaya* or destruction of *Moha* and *Moksha*.

Moksha is the ideal state in which all splendid souls exist in a state of equality. In that state, there is no disparity; there is no difference or contradiction of any kind. There, no one is a Guru or preceptor; and no one is a disciple. No one bows to anyone. No jiva considers itself as superior to others; nor does any jiva consider itself inferior to others. In that ideal state, there are no masters and no servants. All are omniscient and all-seeing.

There is no sorrow of any kind; no old age; no disease; no decay; no degeneration and no death; nor are there any adversities to be endured in that state.

तं द्वाणं सासयं वासं

जं संपत्ता न सोयन्ति ॥

—उत्तराध्ययन २३/६८

(That is a state of everlasting existence and those who attain to that state are absolutely free from all sorrows.)

Every jiva desires happiness because it is in sorrow. The happiness that can be attained is of two kinds; ephemeral and eternal. The happiness arising from sensual enjoyments is ephemeral and the happiness that prevails in the state of moksha is eternal and endless.

अविच्छिन्नं सुखं यदा

स मोक्षः परिपदय्यं ते ॥

(That ideal state is called Moksha in which happiness is unbroken and continuous.)

The lives of most jivas are wasted on the attempt to attain ephemeral pleasures because on account of the absence of pure intelligence, they cannot realise the nature of the bliss of salvation, therefore, the enlightened people have said this emphasizing the necessity of awakening and sharpening the intellect.

विवेको मुक्ति साधनम् ।

(Pure intelligence is the means to attain salvation.)

The awakened intelligence reveals how far the state of salvation is from the soul that lives in this mundane world. The action of attaining that state begins with *Samyaktva* or right faith.

ना दंतणिसस नाणं नाणेणविणा न होंति चरणगुण ।

अ गुणिसस नत्थि मोक्खा, नत्थि अमोक्खस्स निव्वरणं ।।

He who lacks *Darshan* or righteousness cannot attain enlightenment. Without enlightenment, the auspicious fruits of austerities cannot be attained. Without virtues liberation from sensual passions cannot be attained; and without liberation there can be no salvation.

In this book, there are twenty sections, each section dealing with such themes as *Acharya* (non-stealing), *Anasakti* (non-attachment) etc. which provide a knowledge of the way to salvation. In the last section, there is a discussion of the nature of *Moksha*.

Come on, let us proceed on the *Moksha Marg* (the path of salvation), at least twenty steps.

Your fellow traveller
Padmasagar

THE PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

This is a collection of twenty sublime discourses that flowed from the sacred tongue of Paramapujya, Pratahsmaraniya, Balabrahmachari, the gifted orator, the profound thinker, the scriptural scholar, the sadgurudev, Acharya pravara, Shrimat Padmasagar Soorishwarji Maharaj. The delight that we experience in publishing this magnificent work is beyond description in words.

The original Hind version of this collection of discourse was edited by the experienced scholar, Shanta Prakashaji Satyadas.

We thank Shri K. Ramappa, for having rendered the book into English.

We are extremely thankful to shri Rikhabchandji Khumaji Sakaria for his financial assistance for the publication of this Book.

We believe that this book will be studied with devotion in everyt house like *Awakening* (Pratibodh) which has already been published by us.

The President
Shri Arunodaya Foundation

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This book, entitled *Golden Steps to Salvation*, is an English version of the Hindi Book, *Moksha Marg Me Bees Kadam*, a collection of twenty sublime discourses delivered by His Holiness Acharya Shri Padmasagara Soorishwarji Maharaj.

I have rendered this book into English in accordance with the sacred wish of Acharya Shri Padmasagara Soorishwarji Maharaj and as desired by Shri Arunodaya Foundation who have published this book. I am grateful to them for choosing me to render this book into English.

I am thankful to Shri Ajaysagarji, one of the disciples of Acharya Shri Padmasagar Soorishwarji for extending help to me in rendering this book into English by reading the entire type-script; by clearing my doubts regarding some technical points and by giving me useful suggestions.

I thank Shri Arunodayasagarji, one of the disciples of Acharya Shri Padmasagar Soorishwarji under whose suggestions, the book took its present shape.

If there are any defects in my rendering the book into English I hope that the readers of the book will treat them in the manner of the legendary swan which takes only milk separating it from water.

—K. RAMAPPA

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1. NON-STEALING

DEAR HONEST GENTLEMEN AND LADIES,

The initial form of *dharma* or religious temperament can be seen in honesty. Even in those socialistic and communistic countries where religion is considered to be the opium of the masses, honesty exists. The people living in those countries have realized that honesty is the basis for success in business; hence they are honest throughout their lives. In other words, though they despise religion, they are essentially religious.

What is the condition that prevails in our country, *Bhārata*? Here, in our country, various religious and spiritual activities abound in temples, mosques, churches, Gurudwars, monasteries, and other holy places. Thousands of discourses are heard by devotees but if it comes to the question of honesty, we have to search for it with the help of a light. In these days, we read in newspapers about robberies in banks, trains, and buses. Even in those who do not commit such open robberies, we discern corruption, dishonesty, cupidity and moral intrepidity. It is difficult to find even a few honest people among millions of people. From this, it is evident that we like to be called righteous people but that we do not make righteousness a part and parcel of our nature; and that we do not want to become righteous.

Dishonesty is practised for the sake of acquiring wealth but the wealth that is acquired through dishonesty does not remain with us. There is a proverb in Hindi, "*The wealth acquired by stealth flows away through a drain.*" In English also there is a similar proverbial statement: "*ill-got, ill-spent.*"

It is said in Sanskrit also that—

अन्यायोपाजितम् वित्तम्
दशवर्षाणि तिष्ठति ।
प्राप्ते चैकादशे वर्षे
समूलं हि विनश्यति ॥

Anyāyoparajitam vittam
Dasavarshāni tishtati
Prāpte chaikādaśe varṣe
Samulam hi vinas'yati

The money that is acquired by foul means remains with us only for ten years (i.e. a short time). When the eleventh year appears, that wealth disappears totally.

The bee steals little quantities of nectar from flowers and hoards it in its hive but someone robs all the honey from the bee-hive. There is a proverb in Gujarati:

मियाँ चोरे मूठे । अल्ला चोरे ऊँटे
Miyā chore Mūṭe, Allāh chore Unte.

Man steals a bag of money but the Master takes away even the camel (that carries the bag).

One may hoard money by foul and dishonest means but that wealth is robbed.

Swami Sathyabhaktha says : “The thief commits a theft; but he does not tolerate a theft in his house. If a theft occurs in his house he gets agitated over it.”

From this, it is evident that even a thief considers stealing a wicked action; but compelled by necessity or poverty, he starts committing thefts. It is possible for him to keep off poverty by means of hard work but his laziness prevents him from earning money by the sweat of his brow. The cause of laziness is ignorance.

According to a certain philosopher poverty is the mother of stealth; and ignorance is its sire. It is for this reason that the enlightened people remain honest even in adversity; and do not take recourse to stealing or dishonest means to earn money. They know :

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एकस्यैकक्षणं दुःखम्
 मार्यमाणस्य जायते ।
 सपुत्रपौत्रस्य पुन -
 यद्विज्जीवं हृते घने ॥

— योगशास्त्रम्

Eakṣyaikakṣhaṇam duḥkaṁ
Māryamāṇasya jāyathe
Saputrapauthrasya punah
yavajjivam hrite dhane

“The person who is slain experiences anguish for a moment but if somebody’s wealth is robbed not only he but his children and grand-children experience anguish throughout their lives.”

On account of this reason theft is a greater sin than slaying. Instead of committing theft it is better to beg to keep the body and soul together. This is what a poet has said :

वरंभिक्षाशित्वं न च परघनास्वादनसुखम् ।

Varam bhikshāsithvam na cha paradhanāswadanasukham

“It is better to eat the food that is obtained through beggary than to enjoy the wealth that belongs to someone else.”

The hoarding of unnecessary things also is theft. It is said “Every living being has the right to acquire and possess what is absolutely necessary for its existence. Anyone who possesses more than what he needs merits censure and punishment.”

According to this statement even the hoarding of acquired things amounts to stealing.

According to *Uttarādhyāyana Sūtra* greed for money is the cause for theft. The statement is that a man who takes possession of (अदत्त) what is not given commits a theft because he grows unhappy under the impact of the vice of discontentment.

Adatta (what is not given) is another name for theft. *Adattadāna* (अदत्तदान) is the acceptance of a thing that is not given by its owner.

It is stated in *Sūtrakritāṅga* thus : अदिन्नमन्नेसु वणो गहेज्जा ॥ “Anything that is not given by its owner should not be received or accepted.” There is a Sanskrit statement which expresses the same idea. कस्यचित्किमपि नो हरणीयम् ॥ “Anything that belongs to others should not be stolen or wrongfully taken possession of.”

One of the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament of the Bible is : “*Thou shalt not steal.*” The Vedic Command is : मा गृधः कस्यश्चिद् धनम् ॥ “Never desire the wealth of others.”

Lord Mahāvīr’s commandment in the *Uttarādhyāyāna Sūtra* is : “Even a blade of grass should not be taken without the permission of its owner.” In this manner theft is prohibited everywhere.

There are five kinds of theft :

1. **Breaking into a house** : Entering the house of a rich man by making a hole in a wall.
2. **Opening a bag** : Opening a bag containing food-grain etc. belonging to someone else and stealing the contents.
3. **Breaking a lock** : Opening a lock with a duplicate key or breaking the lock to gain entry into a house.
4. **Taking up a thing** that is lying somewhere belonging to someone else.
5. **Robbery** : Terrifying a rich man with a weapon like a pistol and robbing his wealth in his presence.

Other than these, using false weights and measures also constitutes a theft. That means using two different stones for weighing—one of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a kg. and the other of $1\frac{1}{2}$ kg. If an ignorant villager comes to your shop to sell ‘ghee’ you weigh it with the stone of $1\frac{1}{2}$ kg. and pay him for one kg. If a customer comes to buy ‘ghee’ you use the stone weighing $\frac{3}{4}$ kg. and collect from him the price of one kg. The same thing applies

to the metre-scale used to measure cloth and the litre-can used to measure liquids. Even if you make some profit once or twice by such methods, when the truth comes to light, your business comes to an end. If once the customers lose faith in you, afterwards even if you use the right weights and measures, your business cannot continue.

तुलामानयोरव्यवस्था व्यवहारं दूषयति ॥

— नीति वाक्यामृतम्

Tulāmānayoravyavasthā vyavahāraṁ duṣayati

“False weights and measures ruin business”

The four kinds of theft are mentioned in a stanza in *The Praśna Vyākaraṇa Sūtram*. “Great men who are masters of the *Shāstrās* (Philosophies) have described four kinds of *adatta* (that which is not given):

1. that which is not given by the **owner**;
2. that which is not given by a **Jiva** (a living thing);
3. that which is not given by the **Jina** and
4. that which is not given by the **preceptor** (The Guru).

These four kinds of theft (*adattas*) are mentioned in the *Upadeśāprasāda* also.

Of these, the first one is the *adatta* (not given) by the owner. This refers to anything which is not given by its owner to anyone. The *Jivadatta* (not given by *jiva* or a living being) refers to things not given by a living being. One example of *jivadatta* is this : Taking the fruits, the flowers, the branches, the bark, the leaves etc., belonging to a tree is *jivadatta*, because trees and plants are living things and we do not have their permission to take their fruits, flowers, etc. If a *muni* (ascetic) eats impure food contrary to the principles formulated by *Jineswar* though such food is given by a householder if it is not in conformity with the prescribed principles, it is *jinadatta*. *Guruadatta* is to receive and eat food without the permission of the preceptor (the Guru).

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These four kinds of *adattas* (things, not given) are against *dharmā* or righteousness. Hence, they amount to theft. Āryas do not commit theft. Only Anāryas (uncivilised people) commit theft. Stealing brings ignominy. According to the *Bhagavad Gītā*, “The sorrow caused by ignominy is greater than that caused by death.”

सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिः मरणादतिरिच्यते

Sambhāvitasya Chākīrtiḥ

maranādātirichyate

“For a man with a good name the sorrow caused by ignominy is greater than that of death.”

Therefore, all men and women should accept and practise the principle of *Acharya Vrata* (the austerity of non-stealing). According to Patanjali’s *Yoga Darshana*—

अस्तेयप्रतिष्ठायाम् सर्वरत्नोपस्थानम्

Asteyaṣṭhāyām Sarvaratnopasthānam

“If anyone practises the principle of non-stealing; if anyone accepts the principle of non-stealing in its truest sense, he will acquire such a power of insight that he begins to see the countless precious stones that lie concealed in the earth.”

Good people keep away from them the desire to commit a theft, just as they keep off the desire to drink. Because just as the habit of drinking cannot be discarded, the habit of stealing also cannot be discarded easily.

Once there was a woman. She had the habit of stealing, from her childhood. Whatever she could lay hands upon, at any place, at any time, when an opportunity presented itself to her, she stole it and brought it home whether she needed it or not. She had a son. He was very much worried about his mother’s habit of stealing, but it was not in his power to reform his mother’s habit.

Once, having been invited to a marriage, the son accompanied his mother to his grandfather’s house. On the way, he impressed upon his mother the idea that she should safe-guard her self-respect and that she should not

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steal anything; and that if she did not act thus, the honour of their family would be lost in the presence of all the relatives. The mother replied: "I am not mad to ignore the honour of our family. I will not do any such thing. Surely you need not worry about it."

Both of them joyfully joined the marriage celebrations. When the marriage celebrations ended they were bidding farewell to the daughters, sisters and relatives who were returning home. At that time, that woman stole a few blouse-pieces. Her son noticed this action of hers. At once, he shouted, "Mother! What are you doing here?"

The mother said, "Son! I am not committing any theft. I am only doing something to feed my habit."

The house-holders became careful. They took back the blouse-pieces from her and sent away the mother and the son.

In olden days very severe punishment was given to those who committed thefts. Theft is normally committed with the hands. Hence the hands of a thief used to be cutoff.

Once there were two ascetics by name Shanka and Likhitha. They happened to be brothers. Shanka was the elder brother and Likhitha was the younger. The king of the area gave these two brothers a garden as a gift. Half the garden belonged to Shanka and the other half belonged to Likhitha.

One day, the ascetic Likhitha was walking about in his part of the garden and by chance, he entered the area belonging to his brother, Shankha. Impelled by hunger, unaware of what he was doing, he plucked a fruit from a tree and ate it. After eating the fruit he realised that the fruit was *adatta dān* (something which was not given by the owner) and that he had unwittingly committed a theft. He wondered what he should do. At once, he went to Shankh Muni; informed him of the theft he had committed and asked for due punishment. Shankh Muni smiled and forgave him.

But Likhitha Muni was not satisfied with this. How can a man be satisfied with forgiveness when he has committed a theft for the first time in his life? Moreover, Likhitha was a preceptor, that is, one who preached *dharma* or righteousness. Hence the responsibility of observing moral principles was all the greater for him. The preceptor who does not act in conformity with his precepts cannot exercise any influence over society. It is said:

“Flourishing their hands, some preceptors preach moral principles to others. But they do not practise their own principles. Is *dharma* or righteousness a commodity to be sold?”

Those preceptors who preach moral principles to others in return for food and respect are worthless as preachers because they seem to think that righteousness or *dharma* is a thing to be sold for money. Likhitha Muni was not of this type. He went straight to the King's Court. In the court, the king and the others knew that Likhitha was the brother of Shankha Muni. Hence, there was no likelihood of his securing punishment in the court. In order to secure punishment he spoke in this manner, “O King! if any way-farer enters a wayside garden and eats a fruit without the permission of the owner of the garden what is the punishment that should be given to such an offender?” No one in the court could understand that Likhitha Muni was seeking punishment for his own offence. After being prompted by the King by means of a sign, the judge said, “O holy man! The hand of a man who steals a fruit thus should be cut off.”

Hearing this, Likhitha Muni approached the executioner, took his sword from him and in the presence of all, he cut off one hand of his and threw it away. Then, he gave an account of the offence he had committed and said that he had now secured due punishment for having stolen a fruit from his brother's garden. This event exercised such a tremendous influence on the minds of people

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in that country that for years they never entertained the idea of stealing or taking possession of things belonging to others.

A similar incident that made a thief give up stealing took place in the life of Pundit Banarasi Dasji. One night nine robbers entered his house through a hole which they made in a wall. There was a large heap of black pepper in the house. The robbers spread their towels on the floor; put as much pepper as possible on them and tied them into bundles. Then, they got ready to leave. Each helped the other to place the load on his head. There was no one to help the ninth robber to take up his load. He stood near the bundle helplessly. All the other eight robbers had heavy loads on their heads. They could not help him. Seeing his plight the Punditji himself helped him. The robbers went out. But on the way they began to wonder who had helped the ninth robber. To find this out, they went into the house through the hole again. When they tried to find it out the Punditji said, "Brothers! seeing the sad face of the ninth friend, I took pity on him and I myself helped him to lift his load on to his head. Seeing how the Punditji had shown his kindness to a thief, all the robbers were so greatly moved that their hearts changed. They returned the commodity to Punditji and they vowed not to commit a theft or a robbery in the future.

Thieves sometimes give up stealing on account of a sense of shame. This point is evident from the incident that took place in Morbi city.

A beggar came to the shop of a Saithji to beg for wheat flour. There was a door leading into the house. The Saithji went into the house to fetch wheat flour. Seeing that there was no one in the shop the beggar took up a vessel that was lying there and put it into his bag.

The Saithji returned with the wheat flour. Noticing that the vessel was not there, he concluded that the beggar should have stolen it. After having given him some flour, the Saithji said, "Brother! take some 'ghee' also; otherwise how can you prepare *bati* (food)?"

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The beggar said, "Saiṭhji! I do not have any vessel to carry 'ghee'."

The Saiṭhji took out the vessel which was in the beggar's bag and said, "You can carry 'ghee' in this." And he gave him 'ghee' also.

Shamed by this incident the beggar completely gave up stealing.

By means of one significant utterance Bābā Bhārati impelled the dacoit Khadgasingh to return the stolen property and to discard robbery. What was that utterance? Please listen! I will describe the whole incident.

Bābā Bhārati had a beautiful horse. The dacoit Khadgasingh seeing its brisk movement desired to possess it. He decided to take possession of the horse somehow or the other. He was waiting for a suitable opportunity.

One evening, in the darkness of the dusk Bābā Bhārati was returning home on his horse and on the way he noticed a lame man sitting on one side of the road. In order to help him, he stopped the horse. The lame man said, "Bābāji, I came limping from a village and with great difficulty I have come upto this place. I am so greatly tired that I cannot place a single step further. Kindly take me on your horse and leave me in some square in the city. I will somehow go to my house."

Bābāji who was by nature benevolent asked the man to sit on the horse and he walked on, leading the horse. When he had gone a few steps, suddenly the reins were pulled away from his hands. The man sitting on the horse was sitting quite securely. Before making the horse run he told Bābāji that he was the dacoit Khadgasingh and said, "I pretended to be lame only to take possession of this horse. Now the horse is mine."

Bābāji said in a tone of seriousness, "Yes, of course. Now the horse is yours. But I request you not to speak of this incident to any one; otherwise nobody will believe

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the words of maimed people and nobody would help them.” This statement of Bābā Bhārati slowly entered the mind of the robber and plunged him in thought. He thought that the Bābā was extremely kind-hearted. The Bābā was not worried about the loss of his horse. His worry was that in future nobody would show kindness to lame people or maimed people if they came to know of this incident.

The robber did not get a wink of sleep that night. The next morning, soon after sun-rise he went to Bābā’s *āshram* and returned the horse to him. He gave up robbery and led a respectable life afterwards.

2. DETACHMENT

DEAR PEOPLE PURSUING THE PATH OF DETACHMENT!

Lord Mahāvira, the supreme embodiment of sublime renunciation considered detachment essential for the attainment of deliverance.

ममत्तं छिन्देत् ताए

महा नागोव्व कंचुयम् ॥

Mamattam chindaye tāaye

Mahā nago^{va}va Kanchuyam.

“Just as a snake discards its skin, a *sādhak* (one who is striving to attain spiritual elevation) must discard his attachments.”

Soon after his birth, man is engulfed in attachments. Man's whole life is wasted in thoughts relating to attachments such as : “My parents, my play-things, my neighbours, my friends, my body, my family, my house etc.” Man becomes bitterly disappointed and profoundly grieved and he begins lamenting pitifully when the objects he loves become disfigured or destroyed or lost or stolen. A great poet employing an appropriate figure of speech in a beautiful manner has expressed this idea in the following stanza:

यस्मिन् वस्तुनि ममता मम तापस्तत्र तत्रैव ।

यत्रैवाऽहमुदासे तत्र मुदाऽऽसे स्वभावसंतुष्टः ॥

Yasmin Vastuni mamatā

Mama tāapastathra tatraiva

Tatraivahamudāse

Tatra mudāse swabhāvasantushtah.

“I experience sorrow on account of the things for which I have attachment. On the contrary, happiness arises from natural contentment from those objects for which I have no attachment.”

There are two words : Attachment and detachment. The difference between them is only one sound; but if we think of the effects, the difference between them is greater than that between the earth and heaven. Attachment entangles the *jiṃās* in the cycle of *samsāra* (birth and death) and detachment releases the *jiṃās* from *samsāra* and takes them towards salvation.

अपेक्षैवघनो बन्धः उपेक्षैव विमुक्तता

Apekshaiva ghano bandhaḥ

Upekshaiva vimuktatā.

“Attachment is the strongest bondage; while detachment is deliverance.”

In this world, that man who is a lord, not a slave, of desires achieves a real victory.

आशाया ये दासास्ते दासाः सर्वं लोकस्य ।

आशा दासी येषाम् तेषां दासयते लोकः-॥

Ashaya ye dāsā-

ste dāsāḥ sarva lokasya

Āshā dāsī eṣām

Teshām dāsayate lokāḥ

“The man who is a slave to desires is a slave to the whole world. But, the man who enslaves desires is the lord of life (*samsāra*).”

MAHATMA KABIR

considered such a man as an emperor of emperors.

चाह गई चिन्ता मिटी मनुवा बेपरवाह ।

जिसको कछु न चाहिये सोही शाहशाह ॥

Chāh gayi chintā miti manuva beparvāha

Jisko kachu na chahiye Sohi Shāhshāha.

“When desires are discarded, worry goes and the mind becomes carefree. He who has conquered desires is the emperor of emperors.”

Where there is desire, there sorrow abides. Those people who have conquered desires are, by virtue of their freedom from worries and sorrows, attain the greatest Lordship and Supremacy.

The mind of a detached man is like a mirror. The mirror reflects hundreds of things separately but does not retain them. In the same manner, the man who has renounced the world does not desire to possess the things that he comes across. Though he uses them, he is not attached to them.

If anyone puts his hand into a bucket containing water, his hand becomes wet; but if he smears oil to his hand and puts it into water, it will not become wet at all. In the same manner, the mind of a *sādhaka* (one who is pursuing spiritual elevation) smeared with the oil of renunciation is not touched by the water of *samsāra* (existence). Even while existing in *samsār* (life), he remains detached. How can we make detachment an attribute of our soul? This can be achieved by means of “भेदविज्ञान” or the wisdom of distinguishing one from the other. The Lord has expressed this idea in *Sūtrakṛitāṅg Sūtra*.

अन्नो जीवो अन्नं सरीरम् ॥

Anno jivo annam sariram.

“The *jiva* (the soul) is different from the body.”

The senses run after carnal delights. The senses are related to the body but the *jiva* (the soul) is different from the body. The body is not the soul; and the soul is not the body. After death, the body is either burnt or buried but the soul being imperishable remains intact and lives for ever. In order to experience the results of its noble and ignoble acts, the soul again and again takes on a bodily existence. The entity that dwells in the eighty-four lakh forms of life that keep wandering through *samsāra* is the *jiva* not the body.

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If we break a coconut containing water, the round shell comes off in pieces but if we break a dry coconut, the round kernel comes out intact. The body is like the coconut. The *jiva* is like the round kernel and attachment is like the water in it. The *sādhakas* realising this “भेदविज्ञान” or the knowledge of distinguishing the body from the soul strive to dry up or discard their attachments.

We acquire the knowledge of *jiva* by the employment of the expression “I”. Our mind gets concentrated on this usage. Some people consider that the senses are the *jiva* on the basis of such thoughts as : “I can hear; I am blind; I am deaf; I am dumb etc.” Again, some scholars consider that the body itself is the *jiva* on account of such reflections as “I am ill”, “I am well”, “I am taking a bath”, “I am small”, “I am big”, “I am black”, “I am white”, “I am short”, “I am tall”, “I am fat” etc.

A subtler search for the meaning of the *jiva* has been there. “I understand”, “I know”, “I recognise”. On account of the employment of such expressions it was thought that the intellect was the *jiva*. But on account of the use of such expressions as : “I think”, “I consider”, “I contemplate”, “I am worried”, “I am unhappy” etc. the mind has been considered to be the *Jiva*.

Finally, the employment of the expression, “I am”, demolished the entire super-structure of such contemplations. These people say that the *jiva* is that which makes us experience our existence and that it is not the senses or the body or the intellect or the mind. They argue that if that were not so, no one would use such expressions as **my body, my intellect, my mind** etc. “भेदविज्ञान” or the wisdom of distinguishing one from the other is the name given to the knowledge that enables us to distinguish between the body and the soul; and from this knowledge detachment originates. The things that we see in the physical world do not accompany us.

घनानि भूमौ पशवश्च गोष्ठे
 कान्ता गृहद्वारि जनः स्मशाने ।
 देहक्षितायां परलोकमार्गे
 कर्मानुगो गच्छति जीव एकः

*Dhanāni Bhumau Paśavascha oṣṭe
 Kāntā grihadwāri Janah Smāśāne
 Dehaschitā yām Paralokamarge
 Karmānugogachchati Jīva ekah.*

“Wealth remains underground (In olden days people used to bury their money underground since there were no banks); cattle remain in the shed; wife comes upto the threshold of the house; relatives come upto the cemetery; the body comes upto the funeral pyre. Beyond that the *jiva* (the living being) has to go alone on his way to the other world accompanied only by his good and evil actions.”

All things in this world are like borrowed objects. How long can they be with you? Nobody can achieve any elevation by means of borrowed things. Even heavenly life is borrowed through our good actions. Hence even that is not permanent.

क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।
Kshīṇe puṇye martyalokam viśanti.

“When the effect of our good actions declines we re-enter the human world. We have to take birth again in this world and we have to give up heavenly existence.”

Only our spiritual excellence remains with us permanently. Therefore, we should always strive for spiritual attainments and spiritual development; and the basis for those endeavours is detachment.

We can have attachment not only for things but also for persons; but it is always undesirable and improper. The man who is in search of the ultimate truth shuns partiality at all times.

The famous preceptor, Haribhadra Suri has written :

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पक्षपातो न मे वीरे
 न द्वेषः कपिलादिषु ।
 युक्तिमद्वचनं यस्य
 तस्य कार्यः परिग्रहः ॥

*Pakshapāto na me vīre
 Na dveshaḥ kapilādishu
 Yuktimadvachanam yasya
 Tasya karyaḥ parigrahaḥ.*

“I have no partiality for Lord Mahāvira nor do I hate Kapilamaharshi (the exponent of the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy) and others. He whose utterances are wise and sensible should be esteemed and his works should be accepted. (This is my opinion.)” Partiality for a person blinds us to his faults and to the merits of others. Thus a man who is partial cannot reform himself and cannot also appreciate and emulate the virtues of others. Such a man’s life will be futile and wasteful. That is why partiality or attachment is considered to be the cause for all unhappy and adverse events.

सङ्गः एव मतः सूत्रे
 निःशेषानर्थमन्दिरम् ।

*Sanghaḥ eva mataḥ Sūtre
 Nihsheshānarthamandiram.*

“The composers of *Sūtras* consider attachment as the abode of all adversities.”

What kind of prosperity can a man achieve if he is attached to his family? A poet describing such a man has said this—

पुत्रदाराकुटुम्बेषु
 सक्ताः सीदन्ति जन्तवः ।
 सरः पङ्कार्णवे मग्नाः
 जीर्णाः वनगजा इव ॥

G.S.-2

*Putradārā kutumbesu
Saktāḥ sidanti janataḥ
Saraḥ pankārnave magnāḥ
Jirnāḥ vanagajā iva.*

“Just as a wild elephant experiences anguish when it is caught in the slime at the bottom of a lake (unable to pull itself out), the man who is attached to his children, wife and the other members of his family experiences anguish and agony.”

If we think of it deeply, we realize that things are more valuable than money because we use money only to buy them. The body is more valuable than the things we buy for its satisfaction and the soul is more important than the body. I shall illustrate this point with an example:

A certain gentleman went from Nipani to Bombay to earn money. There, he amassed a lot of wealth by his intelligence, industry and good fortune. He built a bungalow; he bought a car; and he lived in luxury and happiness but once he fell ill. The doctors said, “You have a brain-tumor. It can be operated upon only in London. Please go there as soon as possible and get it treated; otherwise there is the danger of your dying of it.”

The gentleman became deeply worried. He found that if he had to go to London, he had to spend all his bank balance; he had to borrow money and he had to mortgage his bungalow. He decided to do so and thought that if he could save his body, that is, save himself from death, again, as before, he could earn money by means of his intelligence and industry.

Accordingly, he went to London, obtained treatment, recovered his health and returned home. Some years later, the inevitable end came. His life left his body. The members of his family removed all his ornaments and burnt his body. His wealth did not accompany his soul. Only his good and evil *karmas* (actions) accompanied his soul. From this story it is evident that the body is more

important than money and that the soul is more valuable than the body. Why is it not possible to discard our attachment for wealth for the sake of the soul, when we do so for sake of the body?

The following event took place during my *vihār* (religious wandering). At that time, I happened to be in a village called Manor. One night, it was raining heavily. Nearby, there was the cottage of an *Ādivāsi*. It was completely drenched in the water. In the morning, the old woman who lived in the cottage put firewood into the oven and tried to make a fire. On account of continuously blowing air, the old woman's face became red but the firewood was wet; so the sticks could not catch fire. Her children were hungry. She had to cook food urgently to satisfy their hunger. At last, she brought some dry sticks from a neighbour. Those sticks burnt well and the food was cooked.

Our work is also similar. Why do *sādhus* deliver discourses? They deliver discourses because they want to cook the food of *dharma* or righteousness through vessel your minds. But your minds are drenched by the water of attachments. On account of it, the endeavours of *sādhus*, become wasted. If the mind is dried by the heat of detachment, discourses can kindle fire in it and can easily cook the food of *dharma* or righteousness. Attachment to family brings about sorrow and grief and lamentation, but detachment wipes our tears.

When the great world conqueror, Alexander died, his body was buried in a grave. His mother came there lamenting. She began weeping pitiably at the grave of her son, saying, "Where is my son? Who has hidden him? Return my son to me! Take my life! How can I live without my son!"

A *Fakir* (a hermit) consoled her and informed her, "Oh mad woman! whom are you calling? If Alexander were your son, would he go away leaving you in this grief? In life, no one is really related to any other."

यह संसार महासागर है,
हम मानव है तिनके ।
इधर उधर से बह कर आये,
कौन यहाँ पर किनके ? ॥

*Yah saṁsara mahāsaṅgar hai
Ham mānav hai tinake
Idar Udar se bah kar āye
Kaun yahā par kinke?*

“Life is a boundless ocean and human beings are like blades of grass. We have come floating from various directions. Here, nobody belongs to any one else.”

He said, “In this cemetery thousands of children are buried. No one has come out of his grave in response to his mother’s call. You are also going to be buried here some day. Therefore, discarding your attachment to your son, return home.” This message reduced her attachment and she returned home.

Once, an old woman, brought the dead body of her only son to the Buddha. She wept and humbly requested the Buddha to give life to the boy again. She said, “You are the very ocean of compassion. You are benevolent. Kindly bestow a little of your kindness upon me and free me from this sorrow.”

The Buddha to comfort her, said, “I will give life to your son by means of a *mantra* (a magical hymn). Do not worry. Bring some mustard seed from any house in which no one has died.” The old woman became cheerful and set out to bring mustard seeds. From morning to evening, she went from house to house, but she found that in every house, some one had died, at some time. She could not get the mustard for the magical ritual. Being completely tired, she came back to the Buddha and he consoled her: “Every creature that is born must die. Death is inevitable for living beings. In every house, some one or the other has died, but people do not keep weeping over the dead. The flower-seller plucks the

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flowers from the plant. The buds become flowers and even they are plucked and taken away. All must die. You too will not live for ever; nor will I.”

The old woman realized the truth of his words and her sorrow abated. She saluted the Buddha and went home.

Sri Rama and the Pandavas had to leave their palaces to live in a forest. In case an occasion arises when you have to leave your magnificent mansion, will the mansion weep over your departure? If any one robs you of your money-bag at the point of the pistol, will it weep? Will the hundred rupee notes in the bag weep over their separation from you? Like the mansion and the money the condition of the entire universe is devoid of any attachment to you. Nothing is attached for you really. When that is so, why are you attached to the external things of life when they do not experience any sorrow for your sake? Why do you melt away in sorrow for them?

When a man is bitten by a snake, he finds even neem leaves sweet though they are actually bitter. In the same manner, when we are under the influence of attachment *samsāra* (life) tastes sweet but that is only an illusion. The most efficacious means of getting rid of our attachments for the world is to deem life a drama.

Ramleela (a drama dealing with the story of Rāma) may be going on. One actor plays the role of Rāvaṇa, another becoming Hanumān burns his Lanka. A third actor playing the role of Rāma kills Rāvaṇa. The spectator pleased with their performance claps his hands but behind the curtain Rāma, Rāvaṇa and Hanumān sit on the same bench and drink tea. There, Rāvaṇa does not have any enmity with Rāma or Hanumān; nor does he hate the spectator. The man playing the role of Rāvaṇa thinks that he is only enacting the role of Rāvaṇa. He thinks that he is not related to the enmities exhibited on the stage and is not also affected by the respect and disrespect that he experiences on the stage (in that role).

In the same manner, we too should discard our passions thinking that life is only a drama in which we have to play our roles and then exit from the stage of life.

Another means of attaining detachment is to be constantly aware that we are going to die. Emperor Bharata's detachment was based on this kind of contemplation. One day, Lord Rishabhadeva praised his detachment in his discourses.

The next day a goldsmith was telling people, "A father is praising his son; what wonder is there?" These words fell on the ears of the King who happened to be passing by in disguise. On the third day the goldsmith was summoned to the court. The minister gave him a golden vessel containing oil and said, "Take this in both your hands, go round the city and come back. Even if a single drop of oil falls to the ground, your head will be cut off. If the entire oil is safe in the vessel, the vessel will be given to you as a reward."

The goldsmith set out carrying the vessel. According to the order of the minister, at various places in the City, dances and musical concerts had been arranged. But, the goldsmith returned to the King's palace without allowing even a single drop of the oil to fall any where.

The minister, giving the vessel to him as a reward said, "You criticized the Emperor. It is only to give you an answer that this trouble has been given to you. Just as on account of the fear of death all your attention was concentrated on the golden vessel containing oil, the constant contemplation of death keeps him detached from life. That is why Rishabhadev who had discarded all passions, praised him. It was not praise given to a son but to an Emperor who is free from all attachments."

The goldsmith delighted by the event, went away.

Here is an example of another King by name Janaka. He was called *Videhi* (the bodiless one) because of his detachment. One day, his minister asked him, "Oh, Lord! Though you have a body why are you known as a

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bodiless one (*Videhi*) ? The Emperor replied, "Tomorrow you dine with me. That will answer your question."

The next day the king ordered his men to announce in the city that the minister had been caught red-handed in committing a secret crime; and that one hour after dinner he would be impaled on the spear of execution as punishment.

The King had ordered secretly that for that day's dinner the sweets should be devoid of sweetness and that the food should be tasteless without spices. After the dinner was over, the king asked the minister, "How did you like the food?"

The minister replied, "Oh King! The food was prepared according to your order. It was prepared well. There can be no doubt about it. But since one hour after the dinner you would send me to death on the spear of execution my tongue kept pushing the food in without tasting it. Hence I cannot tell you anything about the taste of the food."

The king said, "You are not going to be killed. I ordered that proclamation to be made only to answer your question. You believed that I would execute you. On account of the fear of death, your tongue could not experience the taste of the food. This is your experience. Death is going to overcome every living thing in the world at some time or the other. But no one remembers this point. If they remember it, all would be detached. I keep thinking of death always. Hence, I take no interest in sensual pleasures. This is the reason why people say that I am bodiless (*Videhi*) though I am in the body.

Detachment makes us bodiless.

3. ANEKANTA

(The Philosophy of Multiple Vision)

DEAR PEOPLE THAT LOVE CONCEPTUAL UNIFICATION!

Lord Mahāvīr unified by means of the philosophy of *Anekāntvād* 363 powerful and divergent faiths which prevailed 2500 years ago.

Anekānta means viewing the same object from different angles of vision. The same man is father of his children, husband of his wife, uncle of his nephew, son of his father and brother of his brothers. There is no contradiction in his being all these things at the same time.

“Is a stone small or big?” The answer to this question is, “It is smaller than the rock and bigger than a small chip of the rock.” In this manner the stone is at the same time small as well as big. There is no contradiction in this.

Anekāntvāda is briefly called *Syādvāda*. This is how it is defined.

एकस्मिन्वस्तुन्यविरुद्धतानाद्यमस्वीकारो ही स्याद्वादः ॥

Ekasminvastunyaviruddhanānādharmasveekarō hi Syādvādaḥ.

“*Syādvāda* is the acceptance of several points of view of the same object, which are not really contradictory.”

Lord Mahāvīra has given this command.

न यासियावाय वियागरेज्जा ॥

— सूत्रकृताङ्क

Na Yāsiyāvāya Viyāgarejjā.

—*Sūtrakritanga*

“Never make any statement which is devoid of *Syādvāda* or the perception of multiple truths relating to an

object; and which is based on *Ekānta Vāda* or a single point of view.”

Syādvāda suggests only probability (or *Apeksha*) therefore it is also called *Sāpeksha Vāda* or the theory of probability and this is called by western thinkers the theory of relativity. Vedic scholars called this theory *Drishṭi Srisṭi Vāda* (or the theory of truth arising from different points of view).

Anekānta Vāda enables us to see the existence of various characteristics in the same object—visible from various angles of vision on the basis of different probabilities. The *Ekānta Vādi* or the one who believes in a single point of view sees an object only from one point of view. Therefore, we cannot realise that the same object may appear differently from different points of view. In the *Anekānta Vāda* philosophy there is no dogmatic assertion of a single point of view as the only truth.

If *Ekānta Vāda* is a disease *Anekānta Vāda* is the remedy for it. The Buddhistic Philosophy says *Sarvaṃ Kṣhanikam* (all things are transitory). The Vedic philosophy says, *Sarvaṃ Nityam* (all things are permanent). On account of this kind of contradictory statements the question arises whether an object is permanent or transitory. The philosopher who believes in *Anekānta Vāda* says

उत्पन्ने वा विगए वा धुवे वा ॥

Uppanne Vā Vigaye Vā Dhuve Vā

The same thing has been said in Sanskrit.

उत्पादव्यय द्रौष्य युक्तं हि सत् ॥

Utāpādavyaya draavya yuktaṃ hi sat.

Emergence, destruction and existence—*Sat* (reality) is characterised by these three qualities. *Sat* here means substance.

The object that is permanent from the point of view of its totality is changeful and transitory from the point of view of its manifestations. In other words, the universe is real in its *dravya* form and unreal in its *paryāya* form. We can melt the bracelets and make a necklace out of

them; and then we can melt it and make a crown out of it. Whatever the form it takes it remains gold, and as gold, it is permanent, though in its modified form it is transitory. The gold which is the basic reality can be modified into a necklace or bracelets or a crown. The same thing applies to all objects. The food that is sweet when we are hungry is not tasty when we are ill. In this manner, the same food can be sweet as well as bitter, good as well as bad.

Those people who think that *Syādvāda* (the theory of probability) is *Samshayavāda* (the theory of scepticism) have not tried to know what *Syādvāda* is. They might have merely heard of it. That is all. There is no need to convince them. They will realise the difference between those two by means of their own contemplation. The difference between the two lies in the fact that in *Samshayavāda* both remain undecided and undefined. The believers in *Samshayavāda* cannot decide whether what they perceive is a serpent or a rope but in *Syādvāda*, there is a definition of both the levels of reality. From the point of view of *dhravya*, an object is real and permanent, but from the point of *paryāya* or modification, it is unreal and non-permanent. It is said in the *Adyātma Upaniṣhad*.

उत्पन्नं दधिभावेन
नष्टं दुग्धतया पुनः
गोरसत्वात् स्थिरं जानन्
स्याद्वादद्विड जनोपिकः ?

*Utpannam dadhibhāvena,
Nashtam dugdhātayā punah
Gorasatvāt sthiraṁ jānan
Syādvādadvijanopikah.*

Milk changes and becomes curds. But the quality of whiteness is present in milk as well as in curds. The man who realises this truth never opposes this truth.

In the same Upanishad, it is said elsewhere:

ज्ञातिवाक्यात्मकं वस्तु वदन्ननुभवोचितम् ।
 भट्टो वापि मुरारिर्वा नानेकान्तं प्रतिक्षिपेत् ॥
 विज्ञानस्यैक माकारम्, नानाकार करम्बितम् ।
 इच्छंस्तथागतः प्रज्ञो, नानेकान्तं प्रतिक्षिपेत् ॥
 इच्छम् प्रधानं सत्त्वाद्यैर्विरुद्धैर्गुम्फितं गुणैः ।
 सारव्यः संख्याक्तामुख्यो नानेकान्तं प्रतिक्षिपेत् ॥
 अबद्धं परमार्थेन बद्धंच व्यवहारतः ।
 ब्रुवाणो ब्रह्म वेदान्ती नानेकान्तं प्रतिक्षिपेत् ॥

Jātivākyaātmakam Vastu
Vadannanu bhavochitam,
Bhatto vāpi Murārirvā
Nānekāntam Pratikshipet.
Vijnānasyiekamākāram
Nānākāarakarambitam
Ichhamsthathāgathah Prajno
Nānekantam Pratikshipet.
Ichham Pradhānam Satvādhyaih
Viruddhah gumphitam gunaih
Sānkhyah Sankkyāvataṁ mukhyo
Nānekāntam Pratikshipet.
Abaddham Parmarthena
Baddhamcha Vyavahāratah
Bhruvāṇo Bhrahma Vedānti
Nānekāntam Pratikshipet

“Kumarila Bhatta and Murari, the great scholars cannot condemn *Anekāntavāda* because they believe that an object has two aspects namely, its ordinary aspect and its extraordinary aspect. *Anekāntavāda* cannot be condemned by the Buddhist scholars because they believe that the same knowledge may show itself in several forms. Kapila Mahārshi, the exponent of the *Sānkhya* system of philosophy cannot condemn *Anekāntavāda* because he conceived of *Prakriti* as having the three contradictory attributes of *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Even *Vedāntins* cannot condemn the *Anekāntavāda* because they believe that *Brahman* is un-

bound at the level of *Paramārtha* and bound at the level of *vyavahāra*.” (*Paramārtha* is the transcendental level and *vyavahāra* is the empirical level.)

The central idea of these stanzas is that those philosophers who admit in their philosophies the absence of contradiction among truths emerging from multiple vision, have no moral right to condemn the *Anekāntavāda*.

Once, a heavy rain was falling. The whole village was washed away. There were floods in the river that flowed near the village. Five frogs sat on a floating piece of wood. The stick was floating over a deep part of the river. The frogs were thus saved from being carried away by the floods. Here is an account of a discussion they had among themselves :

THE FIRST FROG : We are flowing!

THE SECOND FROG : No. We are not flowing. This stick on which we are sitting, is floating.

THE THIRD FROG : You are both wrong! We are not flowing. The stick is not flowing. It is the river that is **flowing**.

THE FOURTH FROG : Oh fools! The river is here. It is not flowing. Actually it is the water that is flowing. The stick is floating on the waves of the water and we are taking shelter on that stick. If the water does not flow, the stick does not move and we too do not move.

THE THIRD FROG : Who says that the water is flowing? Is water free to flow on its own accord? If it is free to flow as it likes to, why does not the water in lakes and seas flow? The water in the river has to flow because the river flows. A river that is dry does not flow but the river in which we find ourselves now is not a dry river. Therefore, my statement that the river flows is right.

The fifth frog was an old one and also an experienced one. It gave a reply which accorded with the *Anekāntavāda*, “Brothers! From your respective points of view all your statements are true but from the point of view of another they are wrong. The river is **flowing**; The

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water is flowing; The stick is moving; and we too are moving. All the four statements are true but if we discard *ekanta* or the single point of view, all the four statements will be wrong. How is it? Look! The river is stationary; water also is stationary but on account of the river's moving propensity, it moves in one direction. The stick by itself is stationary but if it is in water it moves. Because of the tendency of water to move, it also moves. We are sitting on the stick; we are neither swimming nor flowing." The frogs which believed in *Ekāntavāda* or the single point of view got angry because they could not tolerate the multiple-vision theory or *Anekāntavāda* of the fifth frog. The four frogs joined together and pushed the fifth frog into the water. Those who are fanatical and dogmatic about their point of view or *Ekāntavāda* can realise the truth only through experience.

But those who believe in *Anekāntavāda* do not care for their lives. Those who do not have a logical argument take recourse to the sword. It is interesting to see how a great scholar defeated an emperor by means of the strength of his logic. Here is the story.

One day, the emperor proclaimed that those who uttered falsehood would be sentenced to death. Hearing this royal proclamation, a great scholar of the Court said, "I will come tomorrow. I will utter an untruth yet you will not be able to sentence me to death."

The next day, the scholar came to the court. When the door-keepers asked him for the purpose of his coming, "Today, I am going to be executed on the spear. The emperor has sent for me to execute me hence I have come to meet him."

The door-keepers conveyed this information to the emperor. The emperor admitted him into his presence but he could not order his execution. The scholar had told the door-keepers that the emperor had sent him to execute him on the spear. This was an untruth. Therefore, according to the proclamation he could be executed because he had spoken an untruth but on the previous

day he had said that he would speak an untruth and so according to his statement he had spoken the truth on this day so, his statement was at the same time true and false. How could the emperor execute a man who had spoken the truth? This problem cropped up. So, finally on account of this conflict the emperor had to accept defeat. The scholar was smiling at the success of his logicity.

Listen to another anecdote. A gentleman had two wives. He used to tell each wife privately that she was more beautiful than the other. This made each wife happy. A child can remain in the womb of a woman for nine months but a secret cannot remain in her heart even for a second. One woman said to the other, "The *mullā* told me that I am more beautiful than you." The other woman said, "He told me also that I am more beautiful than you. The meaning of this is that he is fooling us both. Let him come home today. We shall ask him directly to tell us the truth."

In the evening, the *Mullā* came home. Both the women caught hold of him and asked him, "Tell us now, whom do you consider more beautiful of us two?" The *Mullā* said with a smile, "This is enough. If you want to hear it from me, hear it. I think that of you two each is more beautiful than the other." This reply based on the *Anekāntavāda* (multiple vision) satisfied both the women. They felt happy to hear it.

The emperor, Akbar, had great faith in the Jain Āchārya (Preceptor) Sri Hiravijayasuri. One day, the emperor asked him, "Oh great preceptor! When you saintly men turn the rosary (garland of beads) you draw your minds towards yourselves. But we allow our minds to range out of us. Of these two ways, which is good; and why?"

The reply given by the great Jain āchārya (preceptor) was based on the philosophy of *Anekāntavāda*. He said, "Sir, both the methods are good for turning the rosary (the garland of beads). The significance of drawing your mind towards yourself is that you are determined to

acquire all excellent virtues one by one and the significance of sending the mind outwards is that you are determined to discard your vices, one by one. Both the objectives are good but it is necessary to remember that the rosary (the garland of beads) cannot achieve anything by itself. It is only a means to attain virtues and to discard vices. The turning of the garland and the counting of beads will be futile if by that means man does not attain self-purification.' Mahātmā Kabir has said the same thing in a very effective manner:

'कबिरा' माला काठ की, कहि समुझावै तोहि ।
मन न फिरावै आपणा, कहा फिरावै मोहि ॥
माला फेरत जुग गया, मिटा न मन का फेर ।
करका मनका डारिदै; मनका मनका फेर ॥

Kabirā! māḷā kāth ki
Kahi samujhavaī tohi
Man na phiravai āpaṇā
Kahā phiravai mohi
Māḷā pherat jug gayā
Mitā na man kā pher
Karakā mankā dāridai
Mankā Mankā pher.

“Kabir! How can I, the rosary (the garland of beads) made of wooden pieces give you knowledge? If you cannot turn your mind towards God, what is the sense in counting me? Ages have been spent counting the beads but the instability and fickleness of the mind does not end. So, leave aside the beads in your hand and concentrate on purifying the bead of your mind.”

From this, the emperor got a satisfactory and pleasing reply to his question.

Āchārya Harivijaya Soori had a disciple by name Muni Samaya Sundar. He said that one word might have

several meanings and that clinging to any one meaning was *Ekāntavāda*. On account of clinging to single meanings conflicts would arise. If we carefully think about them, we will be able to appreciate the views of other people too; and that would avoid all conflicts.

In the royal court, the scholars opposed this view of the Muni and then placing before him a statement, challenged him to explain its various meanings. The statement was

“राजानो ददसे सौख्यम्” ॥

Rājāno dadate saukhyam.

Kings are the givers of happiness.

The great *muni*, exercising his extraordinary intellectual powers pointed out how the statement had one million different meanings and by his explanation he made the scholars of the court tongue-tied. All those meanings have been published in the form of a *Grantha* (a sacred book) under the title, *Anekārtharatna Manjushā*.

There is an excellent epigrammatic statement in Sanskrit :

“सर्वे सर्वार्थं वाचकाः” ।

Sarve sarvārtha vāchakāḥ.

All words are expressive of all meanings.

There is the need for exceptional intellectual abilities, talents, thoughtfulness and powers of assimilation. Only a talented scholar can remove or reduce the darkness caused by religious dissensions by the lustre of the gem of *Anekāntavāda*. All philosophies are cows in the shed (shelter) of *Anekāntavāda*. This point becomes evident from an incident that took place in the life of Āchārya Hemachandra Soori.

The great Āchārya once visited the court of Mahārāj Siddharāj. He had a stick in his hand and a woollen cloth over his shoulder. They constituted an aspect of the dress of a *sādhu* (ascetic) of the order of Jain Swetāmbar. A jealous poet noticing the Āchārya coming at a distance said this to ridicule him :

“आगतो हेम गोपालो
दण्डकम्बलमुद्वहन” ।

*Āgato Hema gopālo
dandakambala mudvahan.*

“The cowherd, Hemagopala is coming carrying a stick and wearing a woollen blanket over his shoulder.”

These words reached the ears of the Achārya. At once, he pleased every one by adding the next two lines to the stanza giving a new meaning to what the jealous poet had said :

“षडदर्शन पशुप्रायाश्चारयन जैनवाटके” ।
*Ṣaḍ darśana Paśuprāyām—
chārayan Jainavāṭake.*

“Of course, I am Hemagopala, the cowherd coming. I keep in the shed of the Jain Philosophy called *Anekānta* the six cows, namely, the six philosophical systems.”

In the same manner, a jealous scholar pointing out suggestively a Jain *Sādhu* (ascetic) who was passing nearby, said, “Ho! friend! Those who see these ascetics will go directly to *naraka* (hell).” Hearing this, the Jain ascetic slowly smiled and said, “Where will those who see you go?”

The scholar said, “They will go to *swarga* (heaven).” Hearing this statement of the scholar the Jain *Sādhu* said, “According to your own statement I will reach heaven as a result of seeing you and what will you get by seeing me? Think of this carefully and if your thinking is faulty rectify it.” Shamed by this reply, the jealous scholar took back his words.

Once, a certain jealous scholar said to his student, “How dirty these Jain ascetics are! They do not at all take a bath. We should keep away from them.” The scholar made this remark only to insult a Jain *muni* who heard it. His purpose was to provoke the ascetic. But that ascetic was a man of great self-restraint; so he calm-

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ly answered, "Dear Sir! Cows never take a bath but buffaloes welter in water. Of these two types which is better according to you?"

The jealous scholar was put out by this remark. Those who are narrow-minded and jealous are shamed thus.

From the example of Muni Samaya Sundarguṇi, we learn that a single word may have a number of meanings and that a knowledge of all the meanings leads to a composite and comprehensive meaning of the word. In the same manner sometimes the meaning of many words may be a single one. Until we get a knowledge of that meaning there will be disagreement and dissensions among us.

Some pilgrims sat in the compartment of a passenger train. Among them there arose a discussion about the question which fruit is the best one. The Arab who was one of them said, "I consider *anab* (grapes) the best among fruits. They are very tasty and sweet." A Turkish gentleman who was there said, "I consider *uzam* (grapes) the best. As soon as we put it on our tongue we feel delighted." The Englishman who was among them said, "I have not seen *anab* or *uzam* but of the fruits I have tasted and known, *grapes* are the best." The Indian who was among them said, "I do not know what fruits you consider best but in my view *angur* (grapes) is the best fruit. It is both sweet and sour and easy to digest." Meanwhile the train came to a station. All of them bought from a hawker the same fruit. Then they realised that all of them liked the same fruit but called it by different names in different languages.

If we should give a comprehensive and correct answer we should take recourse to *Anekāntavāda*. Lord Mahāvira preached this philosophy far and wide but even before that, intelligent people were using the same theory.

Hanumānji is said to be the best of wise people (*Buddhimatām varenya*). Once Shree Rama asked him, "Who are you? Kindly tell me about yourself." Hanumān gave this reply :

देहदृष्ट्या तु दासोहम् जीवदृष्ट्या त्वर्दशकः ।
आत्मदृष्ट्या त्वमेवाहम् इति मे निश्चिता मतिः ॥

Dehadariṣṭhyā tu dāsoham
Jeevadhṛusthyā tvadamshakah
Ātmadriṣṭhyā tvamevāham
Iti me niśchitā matiḥ.

“From the point of view of my body I am your servant. From the point of view of my life I am an aspect of yourself. From the point of view of the soul I am yourself (there is no difference between us). This is my considered opinion.”

Do we not discern the philosophy of *Anekānta* in this reply of Hanumānji? If we search for them we can find many examples of this type but they are very rare.

As a result of Lord Mahāvira's discrimination of the doctrine of *Anekānta*, all Jain philosophers and other philosophers employed the same argument and consequently they discarded their dissensions and their differences of opinion.

I will conclude my discourse by citing a stanza from *Sanmati Tarka Prakarna* :

जेण विणा लोगस्सवि
ववहारो सव्वहा न निव्वडइ ।
तस्स भुवणेक्क गुरूणो
णमो अनेगन्तवायस्स ॥

Jena viṇā logassavi
Vavahāro savvahā na nivvadai
Tassa bhuvanekka guruno
Namo anegantavāyassa.

“I salute the philosophy of *Anekāntavāda* which is the only giver of light to the three worlds and without which the activities of the world (*samsār*) cannot go on.”

4. PRIDE

DEAR HUMBLE PEOPLE!

The vice which destroys humility and meekness is pride.

माणो विनयनासणो
Māno vinayanāsaṇo.

“Pride destroys meekness or humbleness.”

In the Jain *dharma* (faith), there is the *Namaskāra Mahāmantra* which destroys pride. Here it is given in brief:

नमोऽर्हसिद्धाचार्योपाध्यायसर्वसाधुभ्यः ॥

Namorhatsiddhāchāryopādhyāyasarvasādhubhyah.

(I offer my adoration to Arihanth, Siddha, Upādhyāya and all *Sādhus*.) Here is the same *mantra* abbreviated with the first letters of the words in it.

“असिआउसाय नमः”

Asiāusāya namaḥ.

Even this form has been further abbreviated to facilitate repetition (*japa*):

ओम नमः

Om namaḥ.

Here a *Sandhi* (combination) has been effected between the अ (a) sound of *ashariri* (*Siddha*) and the म (m) sound of *Muni* for *Sādhu* and *Om* has been formed. Here the abbreviation has been formed with the first and last letters, thus :

अ + अ + आ + उ + म् = ओम् (अ + अ = आ, आ + आ = आ)

(In both the places there is a *savarna dirgh sandhi* or combination of similar sounds.) Then in combining आ+उ=ओ the *gunasandhi* has been formed and adding म् (m) sound at the end ओम् has been formed.

The sound ओम् (*Om*) is used to perform salutation or to express gratitude to God and it is the iron-hook by means of which the elephant of pride is controlled.

In order to keep away from pride man describes the material property he has acquired with great difficulty thus, "I have acquired all this by God's grace." The truth is *Vitrāgadeva* does not bestow kindness on any one nor does he look upon any one with kindness. In his eyes all living beings are equal. The Lord seated on *Siddha-shilā* knows all and sees all and is dispassionate, detached but devotees employ this kind of language to exercise control over their pride.

The man who thinks that he knows too much; that he is enlightened and that he is a great scholar never achieves any progress.

If the food that we eat is not digested, in spite of having the joy of tasting it, we would not get any strength from it. Digestion is essential to gain strength from food. Similarly, it is necessary to digest and assimilate knowledge.

Most people in this world exhibit their knowledge but where there is an exhibition of that kind, there can be no self-realization which is the essence of knowledge. Where there is an attempt made to show off knowledge there truth perishes. Those scholars that are vain pose questions that are prompted by pride. They might have heard those questions from somebody and the questions are not born out of their sincere desire to acquire knowledge. If a patient suffering from stomach-ache tells the doctor that he is suffering from headache how can his ailment be remedied? If you want a remedy you must describe your illness not the disease of your neighbour. If you seek remedy from your doctor for the disease of your neighbour, neither your disease nor the disease of your neighbour can be cured. The implication is that if you want a clarification for your doubt, you must place your doubt before Gurudev.

Some people, knowing the answer to their questions put them to the preceptor either to show that the preceptor is inferior to them or to examine the preceptor himself. It is evident that at the root of such questions there is pride, not thirst for knowledge. Even if they get proper answers to their questions from the Gurudev they do not show their satisfaction in their faces. On the contrary their faces lose their lustre because they have failed to show that the preceptor is inferior to them. In fact, they feel sad at it and such arrogant people are really pitiable.

Just as in order to recover your health you describe your disease to your doctor, in order to achieve mental and spiritual purity you must describe to the Gurudev (preceptor) your sins, your griefs and your misfortunes. It is said in the *Pratikramaṇa Sūtra* :

“निन्दिय गरहिय गुरूसगासे. . .”

Nindiya garahiya gurusagāse.

You must give an account of your sins to your Gurudev.

If you go to the doctor and tell him, “I feel hungry at the right time. I am not suffering from indigestion. I take nutritious food such as fruits and milk. In the mornings, I go on a walk in the fresh air. I have energy in my body and enthusiasm in my mind”, what will the doctor say? He will say, “Oh, you might have come here by a mistake. This is a place meant for sick people. You are perfectly healthy. You may go away from here.”

In the same manner if you approach the Gurudev (preceptor) and tell him, “I perform *pratikramaṇa* (an austerity) in the mornings and evenings. I perform *sāmāyika* (an austerity) several times. I perform such austerities as *Vandan* (salutation) *Darshan*, (seeing the Paramātmā) *Pujan* (worship). I go on pilgrimages to holy places two or three times every year. I give charity according to my ability. I study the scriptures. I keep my senses under control and I keep away all passions”. The Gurudev will say, “Then what necessity is there for your coming here?”

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You are a great man. You are a noble man. You are a righteous man. You are an enlightened man. You may go away from here.”

Praising oneself is a kind of mental disease so it is nothing but mere madness to describe to the Gurudev your virtues and to praise yourself before him. At the root of such self-praise there is pride and nothing else. Only he who discards pride and conducts himself in a humble manner can achieve spiritual progress.

“Lordship can be attained by means of humility. The Lord keeps away from arrogance. Ants can gather sugar but an elephant can gather only dust on its head.”

If we put a bucket straight into a well, water will not enter it. Water enters and fills it only when it is tilted. In the same manner, if you are humble, knowledge will enter your mind. A whirlwind uproots and scatters aloft large plants and bushes but it leaves short shrubs unshaken because they are small—because they are humble. Guru Nānak says, “Let Nānak remain small and humble like a shrub. Even if the tall grass is burnt the shrub remains whole and untouched.” The signal bends when the train approaches the station. In the same manner knowledge enters your mind when you place your head on the feet of Gurudev.

The wall of pride impedes our visualization of the self; so without a humble surrender and salutation there can be no spiritual elevation. Even one salutation is enough if it is performed with faith and devotion. It is said, “Even a single salutation offered to Lord Vardhamāna, the greatest of Jinavaras, can lift a man or woman from the ocean of *samsāra* (life).”

Try to cultivate the habit of avoiding the expression ‘I’ and to use the expression *Nāham* (not I).

“I am nothing, I have nothing.” After realizing the truth, *Nāham* (I am nothing) you will desire to know the answer to the question “Who am I?” and then you will realize the truth, i.e. I am *Paramātmā*. It appears easy when you hear it but it is extremely hard to

attain it. Maharshi Aurobindo Ghosh performed *tapasyā* and *yoga* for forty years in quest of *paramatva* or the nature of *Paramātmā*; yet he said that his search was incomplete. Even after knowing all this, if any one feels proud of his intellectual attainments he is a fool.

There is a proverb in Hindi which means, "Pride goes before a fall." An arrogant man will ultimately fall.

Wisdom is the true eye and by means of our wisdom we can realize the difference between our feelings and those of others but pride blinds that eye:

लुप्यते मानतः पुंसाम्
विवेकामललोचनम्

Lupyate mānataḥ puṁsām
Vivekāmalalochanam.

Pride blinds the pure eye of wisdom.

If a man is proud of some eternal principles then such a pride is desirable. If a man is proud of his family, friends, wealth, youth etc. such a pride is undesirable because they are transitory possessions.

Shankarāchārya says :

मा कुरु धन जन यौवन गर्वम् ।
हरति निमेषात्कालः सर्वम् ॥
मायामयमिदमखिलं हित्वा ।
ब्रह्मपदं त्वं प्रविश विदित्वा ॥

Mā kuru dhana jana yauvana garvam
Harati nimeshātkālah sarvam
Māyāmayamidamakhilam hitvā
Brahmapadam tvam pravisha viditvā.

"Do not feel proud of your wealth, youth and people. Time takes away all these things in a moment. Renouncing this *samsāra* which is steeped in illusion, try to realize the meaning of salvation and to enter that state."

War is born out of the pride that is concealed in the heart. If you realize how Hitler who master-minded the Second World War died you too will pity him. His end

was extremely pitiable. He shot himself. Before breathing his last, he said to his faithful servant, "After I die pour petrol over my body and burn it." The man who wanted to conquer the whole world died in this horrible manner.

Pride puts a **full stop** to life because it checks progress. Pride checks progress and causes a spiritual disaster to man. A tall plant can stand only until a whirlwind appears.

The English word "I" is the synonym of the Sanskrit word अहं. The word, "I", wherever it occurs in a sentence, is written as a capital letter. In the same manner, a haughty man wherever he may be, keeps his head cocked up. He thinks, "I am huge and the road is narrow. I am great; the world is petty, I am tall; and all the others are short and tiny."

Once a peculiar incident took place. The various organs of the body grew proud of themselves and each began to assert that it was superior to the others.

The legs said, "We walk; we run; we play football and we are the supporting pillars to the entire body; so we are superior to all other organs."

The stomach said, "I digest food and give nourishment to all the organs of the body. People work hard only for my sake. If I did not exist people would be lazy."

The hands said, "We do all the work. Without us, a man cannot embrace his friends. Even the *namaskār* (the salute) is performed with our help. Therefore no other organ is superior to us."

The mouth said, "I perform two great tasks; one is eating and drinking and the other is speaking. Moreover, the tongue enjoys the taste of various fruits and sweets. The teeth chew food and protect the tongue. I can mesmerise people by my powers of speaking and singing."

The nose said, "I give beauty to the face. If I did not exist people would be dumb. It is only with my help that men can experience fragrance or foul smell. If I stop breathing the body would become a carcase."

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The eyes said, "We show the way to the body. We provide entertainment to people by enabling them to see beautiful sights, movies, pictures on the T.V. screens, beautiful paintings etc. In our absence people would become blind. People would become helpless creatures depending on others' pity for protection and so our usefulness is greater than that of any other organ."

The ears said, "If we did not exist, people would be deaf. It is because of our help that people can hear music, discourses, speeches and stories. That is why people decorate us with golden jewels."

The mind said, "All of you perform your respective duties only according to my directions. The sorrows and joys resulting from your actions are experienced by me. If I am not well people become mad. It is only because God realised this fact that he placed me at the highest place in the body."

At the end *Ātmārāma* (the Self) sent them a notice saying that they should stop their futile discussion and keep doing their duties and if they did not obey his orders he would go away from them. This was the ultimatum given by the Self (or *Ātmārāma*).

The various organs of the body immediately called for an emergency meeting and tried to understand the notice conveyed to them. They thought that if *Ātmārāma* (the Self) went away from the body, they would have no value or usefulness. People would not like to keep them in their house. They would take them to a cemetery and burn them. At the end, they passed a unanimous resolution and sent it to *Ātmārāma* saying that from that day they would not feel proud and that they would abide by his orders.

Ātmārāma felt happy to hear this. From that day, all the organs of the body have been living together with a spirit of co-operation, helping one another. If a thorn pierces the foot, the eye sees it, and the hand removes it with a needle. After the thorn is removed all the organs say that they feel relieved and happy, and that they

share the happiness and relief of the foot. Thus they live co-operating with one another.

Pride is a vice but sometimes pride proves instrumental in the acquisition of knowledge. It is said,

अहंकारोऽपि बोधाय ॥

Ahamkāropi bodhāya

Pride leads to enlightenment indirectly.

The life history of Āchārya Haribhadra Soori illustrates the truth of this statement. He was a priest in the court of Chithorgar. He was a master of the fourteen kinds of knowledge and had acquired an extraordinary knowledge of all the *shāstrās* (philosophies). Falling a victim to pride he declared that he would become the disciple of any one if he could not understand anything stated by that person. One day while he was going about in the city, when he approached a Jain nunnery he heard the following stanza being recited by a holy nun called, Yakinimahattarā.

चक्कि दुगं हरिपणगं

पणगं चक्कीण केसवो चक्की ।

केसव चक्की केसव,

दुचक्कि अ केसवो चक्की ॥

Chakkidugam haripāṇagam

Pāṇagam chakkīṇakesavo chakki

Kesav chakkikesav

Duchakki a Kesavo chakki.

Two Chakris (Emperors), five Haris (Vasudeva), five chakri, one Keshava (Vasudeva), one Chakri, one Keshava, two Chakri, one Keshava and one Chakri. In this manner twelve emperors (*chakravarthis*) and nine Vasudevas are born in the present. The holy nun Yakinimahattarā was repeating this stanza to memorize it. Haribhadra was unable to understand it. He thought, "Hari and Keshava are properly mentioned but what is the *chakki*? That too it was mentioned six times in the stanza." Amazed by the stanza Haribhadra approached her and made fun of her.

“चक्रवाकीव किं चकचकायते माता ?”

Chakravākiva kiṃ chakachakā yate mātā.

Oh! mother, why are you crying like a Chakravāka bird repeating the sound *chaka*?

Yakinimahattarā, the holy nun, gave this reply, “नूतन एव चकचकायतेऽहन्तु प्रत्ना” *Nūtana eva chakachakā-yatehantu pratnā*. “only those that are new can glitter (*chaka* also means glitter) but I am old”. Haribhadra accepted defeat and requested her to explain the meaning of the stanza.

Yakinimahattarā said, “It will be better if you obtain an explanation of this stanza from my Gurudev (Preceptor).”

Haribhadra said, “Where is your preceptor? Kindly take me to him at once.” Hearing this, the holy nun set out accompanied by Haribhadra to help him to meet the Gurudev. The holy nun went ahead accompanied by Haribhadra who followed her like a defeated player. After entering the *upāshraya* (the shelter for Jain ascetics) she saluted the Gurudev with devotion. Haribhadra could understand that the man whom she saluted was her Gurudev.

After Haribhadra explained his desire to know the meaning of the stanza, the Gurudev explained the stanza in great detail. After understanding the meaning of the stanza, according to his vow he became a disciple of that preceptor. He also received *deekshā* that is a vow to lead a life of austerity and spiritual purity. Gradually, he acquired mastery over the *shāstras* under the guidance of the Gurudev. Because he possessed exceptional intellectual powers, he very soon became a master of the *shāstras*. Seeing that Haribhadra deserved it, the Gurudev elevated him to the place of an *Āchārya* (Preceptor) and he became famous as a great Jain *Āchārya* (preceptor). He wrote one thousand four hundred and forty-four works on Jain philosophy. While writing, *Vritthi* on *Āvashyak Nir-yukti* (a commentary in Sanskrit), he wrote a detailed and a highly emotional explanation of the stanza *Chakki*

dugam̄ Hariṇanagam̄ because that stanza had been instrumental in bringing about a transformation in his life. He regarded Yakinimahattarā as his mother because it was through her recitation that he heard the stanza and regarded himself as her son throughout his life. Haribhadra showed his devotion for Yakinimahattarā by mentioning in every *grantha* (book) he wrote, the author's name (his name) as Yakinimahattarasoonuh Haribhadra Soori (Haribhadra, the son of Yakinimahattarā).

विद्या ददाति विनयम्
विनयाद् याति पात्रताम्

Vidyā dadāti vinayam
Vinayād yāti pātratām.

Education gives politeness; and from politeness we acquire fitness.

भवन्ति नम्रास्तरवः फलोद्गमैः

Bhavanti namrāstaravaḥ phalodgamaiḥ.

“The trees that are full of fruits droop.”

In the same manner those people that acquire virtues like enlightenment become humble and meek.

Shri Rāma said to Lakshmaṇa, “Go to Rāvaṇa to learn from him the science of polity.” At that time Rāvaṇa, having been wounded in the war was bed-ridden and was expecting death. Lakshmana said to him, “I have come to you sent by Shri Rāma to learn from you the science of polity.”

Rāvaṇa replied, “I will not teach an unfit disciple.” Lakshmaṇa returned to Rāma. He said to Rāma, “Brother, why did you send me to Rāvaṇa? Was it to help me to learn the science of polity from him or to be insulted by him?” Rāma said, “Why? What did he say?” Lakshmaṇa said, “Rāvaṇa told me that he would not teach an unfit disciple.”

Rāma said, “Did you speak to him sitting?”

Lakshmaṇa said, “Rāvaṇa was wounded. I sat near his head so that his teaching might reach my ears directly.”

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Rāma said, “But on account of this conduct of yours you showed yourself to be an unfit disciple. A disciple should be humble and polite. Go back to him and seek knowledge from him sitting at his feet. You ask for his forgiveness and placing your head on his feet implore him to teach you.”

In accordance with Shri Rāma’s instructions Lakshmaṇa did so and Rāvaṇa pleased by his behaviour taught him the science of polity based on his own experience.

An English philosopher has said, “Be humble if you would attain wisdom. Be humbler still when you have acquired wisdom.”

5. THE NEED TO DISCARD ANGER

OH! PEACE-LOVING PEOPLE!

Peacefulness is the natural attribute of the soul; not anger. Just as water is cool by nature the soul also is peaceful by nature. On account of the effect of heat water becomes hot but again gradually it becomes cool. In the same manner, on account of some external provocation, the soul becomes angry but gradually it becomes peaceful again. Anger is not natural to the soul. Anger is a perversity. Perversity is transitory while nature is lasting.

Anger destroys politeness and wisdom and paralyses the power of the mind. It paralyses the power of reason. It blocks the mind and prevents all innate virtues from manifesting themselves.

The meaning of anger is desiring to take revenge against those who offend us. On account of anger the angry man's blood boils and he loses his physical as well as mental health. Scientists say that we lose as much energy by being angry for fifteen minutes as we might acquire from nine and a half hours' physical exercise.

Anger is more dreadful than thorns. Because a thorn causes pain to the man who is pierced by it; not to the man who pierces him with the thorn. But anger causes pain to both; to the man who is angry and to the man with whom he is angry.

An angry man is deaf like an ocean because he does not listen to the advice of others; nor does he listen to the suggestions of others. Advice only serves to intensify anger.

उपदेशो हि मुख्णिणाम्
 प्रकोपाय न शान्तये ।
 पयः पानं भुजङ्गानाम्
 केवलं विषवर्धनम् ॥

Upadesho hi murkhāṇām

Prakoṇāya na shāntaye

Payah pānam bhujangānām

Kevalam viṣhavaradhanam.

“Advice given to foolish people does not pacify their anger but increases it, just as milk given to a cobra increases its venom.”

An angry man is said to be like fire because without thinking of consequences he causes as much harm to others as he wants to. Why do we get angry? Pride is the cause of anger. The anger of a man is in proportion to his pride because if any one offends his self-importance he grows furious and intolerant and he cannot get back his peace of mind until he takes revenge against the man who has offended him. Until then, he will not also keep quiet. He keeps thinking of the ways by which he can take revenge. The man against whom revenge is taken also in his turn contemplates revenge. He, too, will not have peace of mind until he has taken his revenge. In this manner, each goes on taking revenge against the other and their animosities pass through several generations.

Love cannot exist where there is anger. Lord Mahāvira has said :

कोहो पीई पणासेइ ॥

Koho Peeyim Paṇāsei.

Anger destroys love.

Even after his death an angry man will not attain any state of spiritual elevation.

अहो वयइ कोहेणं ॥

Aho Vayayi Kohenam.

(“On account of anger people fall into spiritual disasters.”)

A philosopher has said, “Anger originates from un-wisdom and ends in repentance.”

Those who get angry are really fools even though they might have read a large number of sacred books. When the intoxication caused by anger abates, the angry man repents but he cannot set right what he has done in his mood of anger and so his repentance is futile.

A poet says that the harm caused by anger is many times greater than the one caused by fever. Here is the Sanskrit poem in which he states this point :

हरत्यैकदिनेनैव ज्वरं षण्मासिकं बलम् ।
क्रोधेन तु क्षणेनैव कोटी पूर्वाजितं तपः ॥

Haratyeka dinenaiva

Jvaram ṣaṇmāsikam balam

Krodhera kshanenaiiva

Kotipoorvarjitam tapah.

(Fever destroys within a day all the energy that has been gained in six months but anger destroys in a moment the good effects of all the noble actions done in millions of previous lives, *poorva janmas.*)

We may think that anger comes to us from outside but according to Vinoba Bhave anger lies latent within us and manifests itself when there is some provocation. If you throw a stone into a lake of pure water slime comes up because slime is present at the bottom of the lake but on the contrary if we throw a stone or even a rock into a concrete tank in a city slime won't come up because there is no slime in it. The hearts of true *sādhus* and *santhas* (ascetics and holy men) are free from passions. Therefore whatever external provocation may be there in the form of insults or abuses anger does not appear in them.

A poet has given a wonderful suggestion to people to give up their anger.

G.S.-4

अपकारिषु कोपश्चेत् कोपे कोपः कथं न ते ?

Apakāriṣu Kopaschet

Kope Kopah Katham na te?

(If you get angry with those people who harm you, then why don't you get angry with your anger and give it up?)

The implication is that anger is the greatest cause of harm. The meaning of the statement that we should get angry with anger is that we should discard anger. In, *Sthananga Sutra* there is a discussion regarding the question; how anger arises ?

“Anger arises on account of four causes : (1) Place, (2) Home (home, shelter, shop, building etc.), (3) The body and (4) the articles which we use.”

According to the present-day philosophers there are the following five causes for anger:

1. Abusive Language : Anger appears when somebody uses abusive language or strong language.

2. Selfish Pursuits : When someone thwarts our selfish pursuits we get angry with him.

3. If our self-importance is offended by some improper activities or behaviour our anger bursts out.

4. Misunderstanding : Anger arises when we think that something is true when it is not true. (A husband mistaking his wife and suspecting her character when he sees her conversing with some other man or a woman suspecting her husband's character when she sees him conversing with some other woman, are misunderstandings.)

5. Differences of Opinion : Anger appears as a result of a misunderstanding between father and son, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, brother and brother etc.

The nature of anger differs from person to person in accordance with their nature.

“The anger of a noble person is momentary. It disappears soon. The anger of a man of average moral spiritual strength lasts two *praharas* (a day has 8 *praharas*). There-

fore 2 *praharas* means 6 hours; that means such a man's anger lasts only some hours. The anger of a man who belongs to the low level of moral and spiritual strength continues for twenty-four hours but the anger of the lowest man continues till his death."

Those who are angry cannot think clearly and those who are rational do not get angry.

The great philosopher Confucius emphasizing rationality said this, "When anger appears in you sit down and think about its consequences. On account of this, your anger disappears."

Mohammad, the Prophet said this while suggesting a way to keep off anger, "If you are angry do not keep standing—sit down and if your anger is still great, lie down." The best remedy for anger is delay or postponement. It has been said, "If you are angry count upto ten and if your anger is intense count upto a hundred. If the mind is diverted thus, anger disappears." Jesus Christ has said, "Wisdom lies in delay when you are angry. Acting rashly in anger is but foolishness."

When we are angry we cannot enjoy the taste of food; therefore it is suggested that we should take our food only when we are in a mood of perfect calmness. Doctors advise mothers not to give suck to their children when they (mothers) are in a mood of anger because anger renders milk poisonous and even blood is made poisonous by anger. A certain woman suckled her child while quarrelling with a neighbour and a little later the child died. A certain doctor took the blood of an angry person and injected it to the body of a hare, and within a short time the hare died. From these examples, it is evident that anger pollutes and poisons milk and blood. Therefore people should try to keep off anger and it is evident that the happiness of people lies in keeping off anger.

A certain scholar was returning home after taking a bath in the river, Ganga. On the way, by chance a scavenger happened to touch him. Infuriated by this the

scholar said, "You fool! you blind fellow! Don't you realize who I am? and from where I am coming? I am a Brahmin and I am returning home after taking a bath in the river Ganga. By touching me you have polluted me. Now I should go back to the river and take a bath again and it will be a waste of time."

The scavenger said, "Now I too should take a bath in the Ganga." The scholar said, "Why should you take a bath?" The scavenger said, "Because my body has been polluted by the contact of a *chandāla* (an untouchable)." The scholar said, "What do you say? I am a Brāhmin, I say, I am a Brāhmin!"

The scavenger said, "In the *shāstras* it is said that an angry man is a *chandāla* (an untouchable) and that it is character not birth that makes a man a *chandāla* (untouchable) or a Brāhmin. You have become a *chandāla* by getting angry with me; and by contact with your body, I have become polluted; and I can become pure only by taking a bath in the Ganga."

The Brāhmin accepted his mistake; and after his eyes (mental eyes) were opened by this conversation, he felt grateful to the scavenger.

उवसमेण हणे कोहम् ॥

Uvasameṇa haṇe Koham

Anger should be checked by means of restraint.

A *Kshatriya* once insulted and abused the Buddha but he remained unprovoked and calm. The *kshatriya* continued to scold the Buddha until he felt tired of speaking. He wondered why his abuses and insults had no effect on the Buddha. He thought about it for a long time. When he could not realize the cause for the Buddha's imperturbability, he asked the Buddha himself to tell him why he had not been provoked. The Buddha said, "Brother! If you offer me a gift and if I do not accept it, with whom does the gift-article lie?"

The *kshatriya* said, "Why? It will remain with me."

The Buddha said smiling, "In the same manner, if I do not accept your insults and abuses, that is, if I do not give ear to them, they will remain with you. They can have an effect on me only if I take them to heart."

Deeply impressed by this reply of the Buddha, the *Kshatriya* went away after taking leave of him.

A great moral teacher has said:

अतूणे पतितो वह्निः

स्वयमेवोप शाम्यति ॥

Athrīne Patito Vahnih Swayamevaup śāmyati.

"The fire that falls in a place where there is no grass is automatically extinguished."

Suppose that an angry man is speaking into a telephone using abusive language. If from the other end somebody says, "Wrong number!" What happens? All his anger would come down to the zero degree; that is, it will cool down. If there is no one to listen to his abusive words whom can he abuse?

After Maharaj (King) Bharthrihari became a *sanyāsi*, that is after he renounced life, he was not at all perturbed by the insults and abuses that people hurled at him; and by way of giving a reply to them he wrote the following stanza :

ददतु ददतु गालिं गालिमन्ता भवन्तः

वयमपि तदभावाद् गालिदानोऽसमर्थाः

जगति विदितमेतद् दीयते विद्यमानम्

न हि शशक विषाण कोऽपिकस्मै ददाति ॥

Dadatu dadatu galim galimanto bhavantaḥ,

Vayamapi tadabhāvād gālīdānosamarthaḥ

Jagati Vidhitametad diyate Vidyāmanam

Na hi śaśaka viṣāṇam kopikasmāi dadāti.

"You have with you abusive language; hence you use it. But I do not have abusive language; hence I cannot abuse you. In this world people can give what they have. A hare cannot give its horns to any one (since it has no horns)."

Saint Ekanath went to Benares on a pilgrimage. One morning after having taken a bath in the Ganga he was climbing up the steps. And then the young fellow who sat above on the bank spat at him. The saint went down the steps again and took a bath for the second time. When he was climbing the steps the young man again spat at him. The saint without caring to see who had spat on him quietly went back again and took a bath for the third time. In this manner he had to bathe in the river fifty times but he never got angry with the young man who kept spitting at him. Finally, the young man was tired of what he was doing. He repented his action and shed tears feeling sorry for having disgraced the saint. Then he fell at the feet of the saint and repeatedly entreated him to forgive him. The saint made the young man stand up and embracing him said, "Brother, why should I forgive you? You have bestowed a great benefaction on me. On account of your benevolence today I had the opportunity of sitting in the lap of Mother Ganga fifty times. You deserve my heartfelt gratitude."

The young man was so deeply moved by the saint's nobility that he became his disciple and remained so throughout his life. Tolerance makes a man great.

Have you seen *dahibadā* (*badā* put in curds) ? It is called *badā*. A poet saw the *badā* and asked it how it came to be called by the name *badā* (great). The *badā* gave the following reply which satisfied the poet :

The black gram is in the masculine gender in the Hindi language. When it is changed into *dāl* (two cotyledons), it is in the feminine gender. Therefore, it says that it changed from being a man into a woman. A *dāl* is put in water and then it is crushed into a paste by the pestle and mortar. Therefore it says that it fought against stones, after purifying itself in the Ganga. Then it was fried in boiling oil. After going through all these ordeals it became a *badā* (or great). On the contrary, a man who does not have tolerance becomes angry frequently. On

account of the harm done by his anger he cannot attain fullness in his life.

A certain woman was going through a bazaar with her daughter, aged six years. On the way, there was a balloon-seller. The girl asked her mother to buy her some balloons. The price of a balloon was ten paise. The mother had a ten-rupee note with her. The balloon-seller did not have change with him. The mother said to her daughter, "Dear daughter, I do not have change with me. I have only a ten-rupee note. We shall buy balloons later." How could the child understand the mother's helplessness? She had been fascinated by the colourful balloons. She thought that the mother was pleading a pretext to save money and so the child obstinately kept asking for balloons. The mother became angry and beat her. The girl fell on the road and was run over by a car. The child became permanently crippled.

You stop your car when you see the signal given by the traffic policeman but Lord Mahavir's message is:

नो कुज्जे
No kujje.

Do not get angry.

—सुत्रकृतांगसूत्र
Sūtrakritāṅga Sūtra

Even after hearing this message you cannot check your anger. Do you think that a traffic policeman is more important than the Lord Himself? Think about it.

Let me illustrate by means of an example how a wise man exercises control over his anger.

This incident took place in America. There was a Professor who was very short-tempered. For every small thing he used to get angry. On account of this habit of his he had no peace of mind. Once he was delivering a lecture on the subject of controlling anger but he himself had no control over his anger. He told a friend of his

about the way in which his mental peace was often affected by anger and asked him to suggest a method to check his anger. The friend said to the Professor, "You buy one hundred envelopes and give them to your servant. Tell him to place one envelope before you whenever you get angry." The Professor did so. According to his instruction his servant placed before him an empty envelope whenever he got angry. On seeing the envelope, the chain of his thoughts and feelings would take a different direction. He would begin thinking about anger itself. He would think thus, "I am a short-tempered man. I get angry now and then. Anger is a vice. I am a teacher. I am teaching others to discard vices like anger. Therefore, I must first control my anger." When he thought thus his anger would abate and he would recover his calmness. Formerly, he used to get angry about ten times a day but now the number came down and sometime later he never got angry. His habit of getting angry disappeared and he became an absolutely sweet tempered person by the time about sixty envelopes had been placed before him by his servant.

Was there any magic in the envelope? No. The envelopes merely served to make him thoughtful and reflective. The entire miracle was wrought by thoughtfulness. A thoughtful and reflective man never becomes a prey to passions. Anger appears when there is some provocation but if anger is habitual it appears even without any external provocation. On the contrary, we can understand from the example of saint Ekanath that if a man is tolerant even a thousand provocations cannot make him angry. He remains calm and peaceful but such people are very rare. A poet says :

"Countless are the people that get angry without provocation. Those who get angry on account of provocation are countable (of limited number) but the number of people who do not get angry even if there is any provocation is very small. Such people may be five or six in the whole world."

6. NON-VIOLENCE

DEAR NON-VIOLENT PEOPLE!

If we should summarize the essence of *dharma* (righteousness or religious life) in three Syllables or in a word of three syllables we should say that it is **non-violence**. It is the essence of religion. It is called *Bhagavathi* in Jain Philosophy.

“The *Bhagavathi* is *ahimsā* (non-violence). She gives refuge and protection to all those who are in fear and anxiety. The protection given by non-violence is of greater value than any of the following: allowing birds to fly; giving water to the thirsty; giving food to the hungry; giving protection to a ship in the sea; giving a shelter to domestic animals; giving medicine to the sick people and showing a way to the creatures that wander in the forest. The protection and refuge given by non-violence is greater than these. It brings welfare to all creatures.” The Hindu religion considers *ahimsā* (non-violence) as the highest *dharma* or duty.

अहिंसा परमो धर्मः

Ahimsā paramo dharmah.

—महाभारत

Ahimsā or non-violence is the highest *dharma* or duty.

—*Mahābhārata*

परमं धर्मं श्रुतिविदित अहिंसा

Paramam dharmam shritividita ahimsā.

—रामचरितमानस

Ahimsā or non-violence is the highest *dharma* according to the scriptures.

—*Ramacharitananasa*

मा हिंस्यात् सर्वभूतानि

Mā himsyāt sarvabhūtāni.

—यजुर्वेद

Do not harm any creature.

—*Yajurveda*

The Biblical commandment is: "Thou shalt not kill." (This is one of the Ten Commandments.) The Islamic religion gives a commandment to *Hajis* (pilgrims) stating that they should not kill any animal in the period of their pilgrimage; that is, from the date on which they take up the *haz* or pilgrimage upto the time of their completing the pilgrimage to Mecca. "Even if a louse is biting you do not kill it. Let it go." This is the commandment. A great Muslim teacher Sheka Sadhi has written, "The ants caught beneath your feet experience the same anguish and torture as you experience when you are caught beneath the feet of an elephant." In this way all the religions preach *ahimsā* or non-violence. If non-violence is taken away from any religion nothing great remains in it. All the teachings of all religions are intended to lead us towards *ahimsā* or non-violence. *Ahimsā* or non-violence is like a boundless ocean into which all religions flow like rivers and unite and become sanctified.

Just as all the rivers of the world flow into the ocean and become united there, so also all religions of the world unite in the *Bhagavathi ahimsā* or non-violence.

Now-a-days, it has become a fashion to convene conferences of all religions. The heads of all religions are invited to the *Sarvadharmā Sammelan* (a conference of all religions) and each invitee beats his drum, sings his song, blows his own trumpet and goes away. The organisers spend lakhs of rupees on such conferences; but no results are achieved because unless people practise *ahimsā* in their lives and give the highest place to it, such conferences are futile. The organisers may get only name but the conferences do not serve the cause of religion. Please listen to the fourth line in *Sambodhasattari* :

“सन्वे धम्मा सम्मिलन्ति”

Savve dhammā sammilanti

All religions unite.

This statement expresses the idea of the unity of all religions. When differences in respect of ideology, traditional and deep-rooted prejudices, religious fanaticism, mutual hatred and blind dogmatism are discarded, *ahimsā* or non-violence takes its place in human life. The true unification of all religions can take place only on the plane of non-violence and tolerance. When *ahimsā* is given the highest place, all prejudices, all animosities, all dissensions, automatically disappear. True mutual love appears.

अहिंसा प्रतिष्ठायाम् तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः ॥

—पातञ्जल योगसूत्र

Ahimsā pratiṣṭhāyām tatsannidhau vairatyāgah.

—*Pātanjala Yogsūtra*)

Even the creatures that are by nature wild and violent grow non-violent and mild in the presence of a person who is non-violent and whose life is governed by the principle of *ahimsa* or non-violence.

In *Jnanarnava* (a great book) this point is explained elaborately.

“In the shelter of a *yogi* (ascetic) who has discarded all passions and attained emotional equanimity and absolute detachment, even animals that hate each other live in unity, amity and felicity. A deer and a lion’s cub love each other; a cow and a tiger’s cub love each other; a cat and a tiny swan love each other; a peacock and a small snake love each other. They live like mothers and children. In the same manner in the presence of such a holy person all animals give up their natural inborn hatred and violence and live in peace and felicity.”

This is the effect of non-violence. While he was in Africa, Gandhiji was returning home after having delivered a speech. An enemy followed him with a sharp knife. Mahathma Gandhi thinking that he was a body-guard said to him, “Brother! Why, do you follow me with your knife to guard me? I wish to be protected by *Bhagavathi ahimsā* and certainly she will guard me. You

need not take the trouble of guarding me and giving protection to me.”

The enemy fell at the feet of Gandhi and said, “Listening to the evil advice of other people I came to kill you but I could not lift my hand to attack you. Forgive me.” This is the magic that non-violence performs. In fact truthfulness, discipline, chastity, purity and austerity and all other virtues appear only as various manifestations of *ahimsa*.

सत्यशीलव्रतादीनामहिंसा जननी माता ॥

—शुभचंद्राचार्य

Satyashilavratādināmahiṃsā janani mātā.

—Shubha Chandracharya

Ahimsā has been regarded as the mother of truthfulness, purity and austerity.

Ahimsā is the root of all great virtues and austerities—like self-restraint, discipline, austerity, meditation, worship etc., which are described in *dharma śāstras*.

एकं चिय एत्थ वयं निदिट्ठं जिणवरेहिं सब्वेहिं ।

पाणाइवाय विरमण मवसेसा तस्स रक्खट्ठा ॥

—जैन सिद्धांतबोलसंग्रह

Ekkanchiya etta vayan.

Niddittham jinavarehim Savvehim

Pāṇāyivāya Viramaṇ—

Mavasesā tassa rakkhattha

—Jaina Siddhantha Bolasangrah

All the *Jineshwaras* have prescribed the austerity called *Pranātipāta viramaṇa (ahimsā) vratha* and according to them all the other austerities are intended to safeguard and maintain *ahimsā*.

Every living being desires to be free; desires to be free from all bondage and to attain deliverance. *Ahimsā* is the most efficacious means to attain this objective. Salvation or *moksha* is certain for those who are nonviolent.

मोक्षं द्रुवं नियमहिंसकस्य

—सूक्तिमुक्तावली

Moksham dhruvam niyamahimsakasya.

—Suktimuktavali

Moksha or salvation is certain for one who is non-violent.

Ahimsā or non-violence inspires a thrilled sense of the unspeakable potentialities of the soul but without realising this people engage themselves in violent activities. In this world the means of violence are countless and each is more devastating than the other; each is more destructive than the other and each is more dreadful than the other. Man has invented such weapons and destructive devices as the stone-weapons, the *lāthi*, the sword, the spear, the arrow, the gun, the revolver, the atomic bomb, the Neutron bomb, the hydrogen bomb etc. each more destructive than the other. Man has invented these to destroy his fellow human beings. The world has seen the terrible destruction caused by the two world wars of 1914 and 1939. In spite of this, the world seems to be preparing for another world war. At present, in the world there are so many destructive weapons that by using them not only a nation but the whole world with all the living beings in it can be destroyed in a few moments; yet the big nations of the world are engaged in building up their piles of armaments.

Of the nuclear weapons that are there in the world today 95% are possessed by Russia and America and the rest are in the possession of the other nations of the world.

According to one survey everyday one hundred million rupees are being spent on the invention of destructive weapons. If the same amount of money is spent on building hospitals, providing education, providing help to the needy and for such socially useful activities, human beings would attain felicity and prosperity. But who can make the leaders of the selfish nations of the world realise

this great truth. *Ahimsā* or non-violence is the only weapon that can counteract the evils of all destructive weapons. In the matter of non-violence, there is no question of disparity between one nation and the other as in the case of the possession of destructive weapons. Lord Mahāvira has given the following commandment in *Achāranga Sūtra*:

अत्थि सत्थं परेण परं ।

नत्थि असत्थं परेण परं ॥

Atthi satham̄ parena param̄

Natthi asatham̄ Parena Param̄.

One destructive weapon can be more destructive than the other but there is no non-weapon (*ashastra*) which is greater than *ahimsā*.

When destructive weapons are used there will be wars and disturbances. There is cruelty in the use of such weapons but no such evil result emerges from the use of non-violence. Non-violence means peace, co-operation and kindness. **Nothing, neither a weapon nor a non-weapon is comparable to 'ahimsā.'** Think of this peacefully.

Mahatma Gandhi was a famous exponent and exemplar of non-violence. When Mahatma Gandhi was thinking of going abroad for higher education his mother according to the advice of a Jain ascetic took from him three promises : (1) That he would not drink liquors; (2) That he would not eat meat and (3) That he would not desire the company of other women. In his autobiography Gandhiji says that he became a lover of non-violence because of the efficacy of these three promises. Gandhiji has given the following lofty principles which constitute the creed of *ahimsā*:

1. *Ahimsā* is the other name for religion.
2. The meaning of *ahimsā* is faith in God.

3. Just as according to the creed of violence we should learn to kill and destroy, according to the creed of non-violence we should learn to die and suffer.
4. The meaning of non-violence is universal love.
5. We do not have any right to destroy life since we do not have the power to create it.

There is no difficulty in understanding the meaning of *ahimsā* from these statements of Gandhiji based on his own experience. The action that is performed by a lover of non-violence influences even animals. This point is illustrated by this example published in a newspaper. On the way from Dahod to Rathalam there is a station called Alavad. There, the signal-man went to give the signal to the train that was about to arrive. The train was coming at a great speed. On the same line there was a mail train. If the line of the arriving train was not changed it would crash against the mail train and there was the possibility of thousands of men, women and children dying on account of that accident if it occurred.

The signal-man went to the signalling place at the right time but at the place where he had to stand to give the signal there was a cobra with its hood spread out. What could he do? And there was no time to turn away the cobra by some means. Even a moment's delay would cause the death of thousands of people. He decided that he should save the lives of thousands of passengers even if he should die for it. He thought that there could be no greater benevolence than this. Standing on the cobra, he gave the signal. By this means the line changed. The train rolled on the other line and halted. The lives of all the passengers were saved.

The Cobra did not bite the leg of the signal-man who had stood on it impelled by his love of *ahimsa*. Without causing any danger to the man bearing with the pressure of his feet for sometime the cobra went away after it was free. In this manner he obtained the fruit of his non-violence at once. The incident was published in all newspapers and he was praised. He became famous and that is another matter.

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We can achieve victory over violence by means of non-violence. King Prasenajit was greatly worried by the enormities perpetrated by the dacoit Angulimal. People used to shudder at the very mention of his name. Buddha, the very embodiment of compassion decided to reform the dacoit by means of *ahimsā*.

One day, the Buddha went into the forest where the dacoit lived with his followers. Seeing the Mahatma coming towards him the dacoit took up his sword. But the Mahatma did not have even a *lāthi* in his hand. The dacoit wondered who the man was. He thought that the man could not have heard of his name; otherwise he could not come to him so fearlessly. Angrily the dacoit said to him, "Oh, vagabond! Who are you? Why are you walking into the very jaws of death? Don't you love your fingers? Don't you know that this is the residence of dacoits and that I am Angulimal, the leader of the dacoits? My practice is to wear a garland of fingers. Whenever a traveller comes this way, I cut his fingers and make a garland of them and wear it around my neck. I always like to wear a new garland. That is why I am called Angulimal. Come here. Today I shall wear a garland of your fingers!"

Mahatma Buddha said, "Dear brother! We have fingers to work with, not to be cut." The dacoit said, "Oh, you are preaching me! Wait. I will make you taste the pleasure of it."

The Buddha said, "I love all living beings and I always enjoy the delight of spiritual satisfaction. I wish that you too should live like me and not try to make people suffer and cry. Try to wipe the tears of people who are in distress. If you do so your life will be tearless and happy. Just as you love your fingers all people love their fingers. Just as you experience pain and anguish when your fingers are cut others also experience pain when their fingers are cut. Stop this cruel practice of yours. Strength lies not in causing pain to others but in giving happiness to others, in rendering help and service to others."

Angulimal was so deeply impressed by the sublime words of the Buddha that he put an end to his career of violence and became a disciple of the Buddha. The next day King Prasenajit came to see Muni Angulimal and saluted him with respect and devotion. Angulimal had come to deserve respect and devotion because of his acceptance of the creed of *ahimsā*.

A man who is a lover of *ahimsā* and who is consequently benevolent bestows his love and kindness not only on human beings but also on animals. He eschews meat-eating and eats only vegetarian food.

The world-famous dramatist, Bernard Shaw was a vegetarian; and he always staunchly advocated vegetarianism; and vehemently condemned non-vegetarianism. One day, he was invited to a dinner, and he went to participate in it. The food served at the dinner was non-vegetarian; and was not to his taste. Being an out-caste there, he got up from his seat at the dinner-table and sat elsewhere. One said to him: "Sometimes when, at dinners, vegetarian food has not been arranged to be served, it does not matter if you take non-vegetarian food. You may eat any food in your house; but at a dinner party, where no vegetarian food is being served and where non-vegetarian food is served, you must compromise your principles a little. That is a necessary social etiquette." Shaw, who despised non-vegetarian food and who loved vegetarian food gave this firm reply: "My stomach is only a stomach; not a grave to fill with dead bodies."

On that day, Shaw returned home hungry but by his remark he had impelled his listeners to think deeply about the subject.

One day, some cows that stood by the side of a road, kept staring at the great Emperor Akbar who happened to be there. Akbar asked Birbal, "What are those cows saying, looking at me?"

Birbal who was highly resourceful and witty, said, "Your Highness! They are saying, 'We eat only grass and live. We do not harm others. We do not utter lies.'"

G.S.-5

We do not steal others' property. We are not unfaithful to any one. We give milk which gives excellent nourishment to human beings. Our offspring become bullocks and help farmers in their ploughing and in doing other work in fields. Even after our death our skin serves all people without any discrimination in the form of footwear. Yet for what offence of ours does the butcher slaughter us? Kindly do justice to us! These cows, in their dumb language, are saying this to you."

Hearing this, the Emperor at once ordered that slaughtering of cows in the slaughter-house should be stopped at once. He also prescribed severe punishments for those who killed cows. But today, our free India has not made any laws to prohibit the killing of cows. Who can say that this is the same country for which Mahatma Gandhi achieved political freedom by means of a non-violent movement?

That man is non-violent in whose heart kindness and compassion abide. Kumar Arishṭanemi was the son of King Samudravijaya and Queen Shivadevi. His marriage was settled to take place with Rajimathi, the daughter of Ugrasena, the King of Dwaraka. They went to Dwaraka with all their relatives and friends.

While the chariot in which Kumar Arishṭanemi sat was entering the City, his eyes fell on a cattle-shed in which some animals were kept. On enquiry, he found out that those animals were kept there to be killed and cooked for the marriage guests. On hearing this, the prince's heart was filled with compassion and pain. The marriage was the cause for this proposed large-scale slaughter! The prince thought that he was responsible for it. He requested the people there to release the animals at once. Accordingly they were set free. Then, he ordered his charioteer to drive back the chariot and said, "Now I will marry not Rajimathi but *Mokshalakshmi* (i.e., I will seek my salvation).

There is no divorce between the word and action of great men (*mahātmās*). The prince became a mendicant

and performed a severe penance. Getting rid of his *Karmas* (actions) he attained *Kevaljnāna* (the highest enlightenment). Then, establishing four *Sanghas* (societies) he began preaching to people the way to attain salvation. In this manner, he became the 22nd *Thirthankar* and he is the 22nd of the 24 Jain *Thirthankaras* (those who help us to cross the ocean of *samsār*).

Even the life of Parshwanāth, the 23rd *Thirthankara* is connected with *ahimsā* (non-violence). Before he received *Deekshā*, that is before he became a Jain *Muni*, he was called Parshwakumar. That was his original name. Once, he was going on an elephant with his mother, Vamadevi, in the outskirts of Benaras. He happened to see an ascetic performing a sacrifice called *Panchagni*; and said to him, "Where there is violence, there is only a show of *Dharma*; not *Dharma* (true religion). In your very presence, a couple of cobras are being burnt in the sacrificial fires and you think that this is *Dharma*." He asked some workers there to take out the Cobras from the fire. While the people who were there, condemning the ascetic, he returned home.

एवं खु णाणिणो सारं

जं न हिंसइ किंचणं ॥

Evam khu nāṇiṇo sāraṃ

Jam na hinsai kinchanam.

"The essence of the knowledge of an enlightened man is that he does not cause violence to any creature."

A man becomes an *ahimsak* or a non-violent person by acting thus.

7. OBSERVANCE

OH PEOPLE OF EXCELLENT CONDUCT!

In Jain *Dharma*, a great emphasis is laid on the necessity of observance or practice. The *Ācāranga Sutra* which embodies the principles relating to *acharana* or practice is the first and foremost of the forty-five *Āgamas* (*Shastras*).

ज्ञान क्रियाभ्यां मोक्षः ॥

Jnāna kriyabhyaṃ Mokṣaḥ.

“Salvation results from knowledge and action.”

According to this statement, action or observance is of greater importance than knowledge. Even in life, men who may be illiterate but whose conduct and action are good are given greater honour than those who are scholarly but whose conduct and action are ignoble.

Evil conduct pollutes the soul and noble conduct purifies and ennobles the soul. That is why great sages have proclaimed:

आचारः प्रथमो धर्मः ॥

Āchāraḥ Prathamō Dharmah.

“Right action is the first and foremost *dharma* or duty.”

Undoubtedly, knowledge is the first necessity but righteousness or *dharma* begins with right conduct. Evil conduct enfeebles the soul but good conduct ennobles it.

There is an English proverb which says, “If money is lost nothing is lost. If health is lost something is lost; and if Character is lost everything is lost.” This is a great truth and we should realize its value.

There is a similar proverbial statement in Sanskrit also :

अक्षीणो वित्ततः क्षीणो
वृत्ततस्तु हतो हतः ॥

*Akshino vittatah kshino
Vrittatastu hato hatah.*

“The man who has lost his wealth has lost nothing but the man whose character is lost is as good as being dead.”

It is necessary to make a lot of sacrifices and to practise tolerance to maintain the purity of our conduct or action. Without hardships objectives cannot be fulfilled. When you are ready and willing to face and endure all kinds of hardships for the sake of the attainment of worldly prosperity which is mutable and transitory, you should be happy and willing to endure difficulties and adversities to attain *Sadāchār* or nobility of conduct, which is a giver of enduring felicity.

In order to secure a place in the State Legislative Assembly or in Parliament you have to contest elections, spend lots of money and sweat a lot. When that is so, can you attain the status of *Paramātmā* easily? In order to attain the state of *Paramātmā* you must fight against anger, pride, delusion, greed etc., which are the enemies of the soul. You have to perform *tapasyā* and you have to renounce all your affluence and influence, and help others.

The *tamboorā* has four strings. They produce four sounds, namely, *Pa-sā*, *Sā-sa* and these sounds provide a basis for the singer to render his song. In the same manner, in life, the *jīva*, if it should lead a pure and righteous existence needs the support or basis of *darshan* (faith in *shāstras*), *Jñān* (knowledge of *shāstras*), *Chāritrya* (character) and *tapā* (austerity).

Just as the sounds produced by the strings of a *sā-rangi* please the ears of the listeners, in life the conduct emerging from right action and character would please

people. This is the reason why a man of noble character and conduct achieves popularity and esteem. People talk of social reforms but society is made up of individuals. Therefore if every individual reforms himself society becomes reformed automatically.

Youngsters are naturally influenced by the character and conduct of elders. Children imitate the good and bad actions of the elders in the house because they are influenced by them. By observing the children in a family we can roughly realize the kind of elders that are in the family because children are naturally influenced by the good and bad actions of their elders. They are like a blotting paper receiving impressions.

What you know and what you believe in is not of much importance. What you do actually is of more importance than your knowledge and beliefs. The implication is that conduct is more valuable than knowledge or beliefs.

Pratikramaṇa and *Sāmāyik* and the other religious activities performed at home at the right time as a routine are lifeless rituals but they become meaningful and efficacious if they are a part of our very life.

A man of right character and conduct eschews self-glorification. Therefore, it is undesirable to glorify yourself. There is no need to describe the fragrance of a scent and no need to beat a drum to give it publicity. Its own perfume indicates the quality of the scent and the perfume is in the scent. In the same manner a man's character is revealed by his conduct. Knowledge remains in the mind but you do not salute the head of the Gurudev. You salute his feet because the feet symbolize action and conduct. The task of moving about is done by the feet and we move about according to the dictates of our knowledge. An English proverb says, "Charity begins at home." Every man reaches his destination by means of his own feet. You cannot walk with the feet of another man; but you can know how to walk (in the right direction) by looking at another who is walking. You

cannot reach your destination just because another man reaches his destination. You have to reach your destination by your own efforts.

अरिहंतो असमत्थो
तारिञं लोआण भवसमुद्दम्मि ।
मग्गे देसण कुसलो
तरन्ति जे मग्गि लग्गन्ति ॥

*Arihanto asamatto,
Tarium loāṇa bhavasamuddammi
Magge desana kusalo
Taranti je maggi lagganti.*

“Arihantadeva is incapable of taking people across the ocean of *samsāra*. He can only show the way. Only those can cross the ocean of *Samsāra* who cross it by their own efforts. In other words, salvation can be attained by people by virtue of their own practice of ethical principles.”

The man who does not act according to the dictates of his knowledge is a fool though he may be learned.

शास्त्राप्यधीत्यापि भवन्ति मूर्खैः
यस्तु क्रियावान् पुरुषः स विद्वान् ॥
*Shāstrānyadhityāpi bhavanti murkhaḥ
Yastu kriyāvān puruṣaḥ sa Vidvān*

“Even though some might have mastered the *Shas-tras*, they are fools if they do not act according to them. A true scholar is one who acts according to his knowledge.”

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan who was for some time President of India remarked that India needed not formal education (measured by degrees) but character. Here is a beautiful English couplet which expresses the same idea.

“A man of words, not of deeds,
is like a garden full of weeds.”

Knowledge of *Shāstras* would be futile and ineffective if it is not put into action. But the knowledge of *Shāstras* is not unimportant because it is that knowledge which inspires action. But if we think of their relative importance action is of the highest importance. *Shāstra*, *dharma* and *acharan*; of these *acharan* (action) is of greater importance than the other two :

अज्ञेभ्यो ग्रन्थिनः श्रेष्ठाः
 ग्रन्थिभ्यो धारिणो वराः ।
 धारिभ्यो ज्ञानिनः श्रेष्ठाः
 ज्ञानिभ्यो व्यवसायिनः ॥

Ajñebhyo granthinah shreshthāḥ
Granthibhyo dhāriṇo varaḥ
Dhāribhyo jñāninah shreshthāḥ
Jñānibhyo vyavasāyinaḥ.

It is said in *Manusmriti* that—

“Those who study the *Shāstras* are better than ignorant people; those who get them by heart are better than those who merely study them. Those who assimilate the *Shāstras* are better than those who merely memorize them. But those who act according to their knowledge are better than those who possess only a theoretical knowledge of the *Shāstras*.”

Preaching is easy; but practising the precepts is difficult. If a death occurs in somebody else's house, we easily condole with the bereaved and give them comfort and consolation but if we suffer bereavement, we cannot check our tears and sorrow, we cannot control our sorrow, and we cannot console our own minds and hearts. This kind of thing happens not only in the case of *Shrāvakas* and *shrāvikas*, but also in the case of *Sādhakas* because all of us are *Sādhakas*, but not *Siddhas*.

What was the plight of the first *Gaṇadhara Goutama Swāmy*, the staunch follower of Lord Mahāvira who was the leader of fourteen thousand *Sādhus* (hermits), after Lord Mahāvira attained *Nirvāna*? All of you know that

story. Gowtama Swamy began weeping like an ordinary man. He wept thus not for ten or fifteen minutes but for the whole night. He kept lamenting over the separation from Lord Mahāvira but in the fourth *prahara* that is in the last part of the night or by early morning, the chain of his feelings and thoughts took a different direction. He began to think, “Lord Mahāvira’s body was perishable and transitory. That had to perish and become separated from me but the Lord’s message is imperishable. It can bring spiritual welfare to all beings. Falling a victim to *moha* (desire) I wept and now I realize that lamentation is futile and that it brings no benefit; on the contrary lamentation pollutes the soul. What a fool have I been! I have memorized the message of Lord Mahāvira but I have not acted according to it. I stand condemned. I was Lord Mahāvira’s favourite disciple but I have become an unfit disciple of Lord Mahāvira by my action of weeping over this separation from his body. No, no, I should stop weeping and I should prove that I am his true disciple.”

By this kind of thinking, he attained *Kevaljnān* or the highest knowledge. As long as he had attachment for the body of Mahāvira that attachment impeded his attempts to attain *Kevala Jnān* but when that impediment was overcome he attained absolute knowledge and became a truly enlightened person.

पर उपदेश कुशल बहुतेरे ।

जे आचरहि ते नर न घनेरे ॥ —रामचरितमानस

Par upadesh kushal bahutere

Je ācharhim te nara na ghanere.

Ramcharitmanas

“There are countless people that can console others in their sorrows. But those who practise their own precepts are very rare.”

Once Swami Vivekananda went to America. There when someone laughed at his simple dress, he said to him, “In your country it is a tailor that creates Civility but in the country where I live, it is conduct or beha-

viour that creates Civility.” Expensive dress shows that you are an affluent man but what is the relationship between civility and dress? Even thieves, dacoits, pickpockets, prostitutes and immoral persons wear excellent dress and move about showing off their dress but no one considers them as cultured or gentle people.

The writers of *Shāstras* say this while describing the importance of action or conduct.

पढमं नाणं तओ दया ॥

Padhamam Nānam Tao Dayā.

“First knowledge and then kindness.”

In this context *dayā* means action prompted by knowledge. From the following example we can know the adversity that can arise if our action is not in conformity with our knowledge.

There was a beautiful mansion in a town. The husband and the wife who owned that mansion were sleeping one night. When it was past mid-night a burglar broke into the house by removing the window bars. On hearing the noise of the bars being bent and broken, the wife woke up. Softly waking up her husband she said to him in a low tone, “Are you awake?”

The husband said, “Yes, yes I am awake. What is the matter?”

The wife said, “Burglars have broken into the house!”

The husband said, “I know it.”

The wife said, “The burglar is going towards the almirah.”

The husband said, “I know it.”

The wife said, “He is taking out the bundles of currency notes.”

The husband said, “I know it.”

The wife said, “He has put all the notes into his bag.”

The husband said, “I know it.”

The wife said, “The burglar has jumped out through the window to go away.”

The husband said, "I know it." The wife said, "The burglar must have gone a long distance." The husband said, "I know it." The wife said, "What is this? You keep saying, 'I know it; I know it.' You do not seem to care for the money. The money has been burgled under your very nose and you have done nothing."

‘तोड तिजोरी धन लियो
चोर गयो अतिदूर ।
जाणूँ- जाणूँ कर रह्यो,
जाण पणामें धूर ॥’

Tod tijori dhan lio
Chor gayo atidur
Janu janu kar rahyo
Jana paname dhur.

"The thief has stolen the money from the safe and has gone a long distance; but you keep saying, "I know" without trying to do anything about it."

The following incident took place at Badhauda. There a conference took place, under the Presidentship of Sayaji Rao. At the conference an eminent scholar from Madras delivered a speech which was remarkable for its logical reasoning. The subject of the lecture was "Non-violence and Its Importance in Life". The style of the speech was so fascinating that the audience listened to him spell-bound. While he was lecturing, drops of perspiration appeared on his face. He took out his handkerchief to wipe off the perspiration but owing to his carelessness and forgetfulness along with the kerchief he took out two eggs from his pocket and they fell on the ground! The audience who noticed this, were shocked. They wondered how a man who delivered such a beautiful lecture on non-violence could eat eggs. The speaker who was shamed by the occurrence sat in a corner completely put out. While making the presidential remarks Sayaji Rao said, "Our country is being ruined by such people. There is no relationship between their words and actions."

कहते सो करते नहीं
 मुह के बडे लबार ।
 काला मुंह हां जायगा
 साईं के दरबार ॥

Kahate so karate nahi
Muha ke bade labar
Kālā muha ho jāyagā
Sayike darbār.

“The words of those who preach without practising are deceptive. In the Lord’s Court, their faces will grow dark with guilt.”

A certain scholar while delivering a discourse on religion said that eating brinjals was sinful because the brinjal contained seeds; each seed had a life in it; destroying *jivas* was violence; violence would bring sin and the bondage of sin would take the sinner to hell hence those who had faith in religion should give up eating brinjals. The discourse was over. The listeners returned home. The scholar was also returning home. On the way, he saw a vegetable shop and his eyes fell on a heap of brinjals which were round, small and fresh. With the money he had obtained as offering at the discourse he was buying brinjals. A man who had listened to the discourse also came to the shop to buy vegetables. He caught the scholar red-handed. The listener said, “Hello Sir! What are you doing here? In your discourse, you exhorted people not to eat brinjals but now you are buying them. Why so?”

The scholar said, “Brother, the fact is we should not eat brinjals described in the *Shāstras* but these brinjals are meant to be eaten. The two are not the same. Moreover, we preach what is written in the *Shāstras*. We cannot help doing so. We should not do injustice to the writers of the *Shāstras*. We should not be unfaithful to them. Our duty is to explain what is written in the *Shāstras*. By carrying out that duty we receive the money-offerings. In my discourse I preached that people must

give up eating brinjals. I did not say that I would not eat brinjals.”

The listener was angered by the scholar's explanation and he never attended his discourse afterwards.

“Flourishing the hands, preceptors preach lofty precepts to others but if the preceptors do not practise what they preach, then for them precepts are things to be sold for money. They preach and receive money offerings in return just as we buy things in a bazaar. Those preceptors who consider ethical precepts as things to be sold for money are unfit to be preceptors.”

Those preceptors who do not practise what they preach have no right to open their mouths to preach to others. Kabir has said :

करनी करै सो पूत हमारा, कथनी कथै सो नाति ।
रहणी रहै सो गुरु हमारा, हम रहणी के साथी ॥

Karani karai so poot hamārā
Kathani kathai so nāti
Rahani rahai so guru hamārā
hamrahani ke sāthi.

“One who acts is our son, one who talks is grandson, one who lives with character is our Guru. We are companions of character.”

Their teacher taught the Kauravas and the Pāndavas :

“सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर ॥”

Satyam vada. Dharmam chara.

“Speak the truth; carry out or practise *dharma* or duty.”

The next day the boys remembered what was taught to them and recited it but Yudhisthira could not remember his lesson. The teacher rebuked him. On the third day also Yudhisthira said the same thing. He said that, he could not remember the lesson. The teacher got angry, reprimanded him and beat him.

After being beaten thus Yudhisthira smiled and said, “By your kindness now I remember the lesson.”

The teacher said, "Very good, recite." Yudhisthira said, "Sir, why should I recite it? I have taken the test and passed it." The teacher was surprised by what Yudhisthira said. Since it was like a riddle, he asked him to explain it.

Yudhisthira said, "Dear sir! *Dharma* requires that we should not get angry. I had a doubt whether I would remain calm even if there was some provocation to get angry. Therefore according to the precept, "Speak the truth", I spoke the truth saying that I could not remember the lesson, even after receiving beatings and rebukes from you, and so my doubt was cleared because I acted according to the second precept and thus I remembered the lesson. The teacher was greatly pleased by this reply. Yudhisthira became famous as *Dharmarāja* by thus acting according to what was taught to him.

One day Mohammad, the prophet being tired after a long journey was taking rest in the outskirts of a village and there a dead body was being taken to the cemetery. The prophet stood up to offer his respects to the departed one. His disciples said to him, "Sir, this is the dead body of a Jew!" The prophet said, "Is not a Jew a human being? By respecting him we are respecting humanity."

Great men have the responsibility of acting according to *dharma* or righteousness because others follow them treating them as the exemplars of great virtues.

8. JEALOUSY

DEAR PEOPLE THAT COMPETE WITH ONE ANOTHER

Jealousy and the spirit of competition are more or less the same but there is some difference between them. There is as much difference between them as there is between salt and sugar. Burning with intolerance at the sight of the happiness of others is jealousy but the spirit of competition does not produce such intolerance.

Those who are prompted by the spirit of competition endeavour to reach the level of those who are superior to them. This is a virtue, fit to be cultivated.

Just as the blood of an angry man boils, the blood of a jealous man boils and his mind is unhappy. He tries to cause harm to others in order to get rid of his unhappiness. In this manner he is unhappy and he causes unhappiness to others. Hence jealousy is a vice that should be discarded.

हेतावीर्ष्युः फले नेर्ष्युः ॥

—चरकसंहिता

Hetāvirshyuh phale Nerṣyuh.

—*Charakasāmhita*

“Envy is admissible in respect of causes (this is called emulation) not in respect of results or effects.”

If anyone has acquired material wealth, we should not feel jealous of him but on the contrary we should try to realize the causes for his becoming affluent; we should understand and realize the intelligence and industry by virtue of which he acquired his wealth. We too should try to acquire wealth like him by means of hard work and intelligence. Not only this; we can also

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try to acquire greater affluence than his. The desire prompted by jealousy to seize by foul means the wealth of another man makes man a devil. Jealousy makes man a monster.

The feeling of jealousy should not appear in men. Hence philosophers advocate a life of simplicity. Tao, the great Chinese philosopher says:

“Jealousy disappears if you stop showing off your affluence before others.”

If people burn with jealousy seeing your affluence, your ornaments and your expensive dress you give them up. Make this the motto of your life: “Simple living and high thinking.” If you do so, you will not provoke the fire of jealousy in others. This is with respect to the jealousy of others. If you want to free yourself from the fire of your own jealousy, you have to make efforts towards that end since the matter is in your hands. Do not allow jealousy to appear in your mind, under any circumstances. If jealousy appears in you, it will annihilate your intellectual powers.

इर्ष्या हि विवेकपरिपन्थिनी ॥

Irshyā hi Vivekparipanthini.

“Jealousy is the enemy of intelligence.”

Unwisdom causes unhappiness.

अविवेकः परमापदां पदम् ॥

Avivekaḥ Paramāpadāṁ Padam.

(Adversities arise in the absence of wisdom).

If you want to keep off unwisdom, you must give up your jealousy.

Lord Mahavira has said:

सव्वत्थ विणीय मच्छरे ॥

—सूत्रकृतांग सूत्र

Savvattha Vinīya Machchare.

—Sutrakṛitāṅga Sūtra

“Keep off jealousy at all places.”

Cheerfulness is the opposite of jealousy. If jealousy results from our intolerance of others' prosperity, cheerfulness results from our joy at others' prosperity.

It has been said :

सुरम्यान् कुसुमान् दृष्ट्वा
यथा सर्वः प्रसीदति

प्रसन्नानपरान् दृष्ट्वा
तथा त्वं सुखमाप्नुयात्

Suramyān kusumān drisṭvā

Yathā sarvaḥ prasīdati

Prasannānaparān drisṭvā

Tathā tvam sukhamāpnuyāt

“Rejoice at the prosperity of others just as people feel delighted at the sight of beautiful flowers.”

—*Rashmimala* 7/8

If we are happy at others' happiness and if others are happy at our happiness, no one would wish to go to heaven. This world itself would become a heaven. If we should make this world a heaven and if there should be joy everywhere it is necessary that we should cultivate the habit of being cheerful. That day is blessed on which the feeling of joy at others' happiness rises like a wave.

सत्त्वेषु मैत्री गुणेषु प्रमोदः ॥

Satveshu maitri Guṇishu Pramodaḥ

“Amity with all beings and felicity at the sight of happy people must arise in our hearts.”

Those who are competitive have great ambitions. They endeavour to excel those who are more virtuous, who are more prosperous and who are greater artists. But the jealous people cannot tolerate the superiority of others; and in consequence, they try to drag them down. Envy leads to emulation but jealousy leads to calumny.

G.S.—6

Jealous people are intolerant of the superiority of others. They prefer the company of those who are inferior to them. They fall a victim to the inferiority complex because they think that those of whom they are jealous are superior to them. The jealous people may be kept away by their enemies; and may be pardoned but their jealousy does not leave them until it ruins them completely. Jealousy is a malady which has no remedy and which has no end at all.

य ईर्ष्युः परवित्तेषु, रूपे वीर्ये कुलान्वये ।
सुख-सौभाग्य-सत्कारे, तस्य व्याधिरनन्तकः

Ya irshyuh paravitteshu

Rupe virye Kulānvaye

Sukha sowbhāgya satkāre

Tasya Vyādhiranantakah

—*Viduranīthih*

“The malady of jealousy experienced by a man who is jealous of others’ wealth, beauty, strength, happiness, family-background, prosperity and charity is without remedy and without an end”.

Poverty (*daridratā*) is the sister of prosperity (*lakshmi*). Why do men become poor by their jealousy? Explaining the reason for this, the famous philosopher and Poet Thiruvalluvar says, “*Lakshmi* (wealth) does not abide with jealous people. She leaves her sister *daridratā* (poverty) with them.” People do not like to be poor but they are not ready to discard jealousy which brings poverty.

Jealousy has become a habit with people. If any one happens to get from the government a reward, an honour, a title or a position others begin to burn with jealousy. If one merchant prospers in his business, the other merchants in the neighbourhood are burnt to ashes by jealousy. If a sister-in-law’s jewels are lost or stolen she weeps not over her loss but over the idea that her sister-in-law’s jewels are safe. She weeps thinking, “Oh, why are her jewels safe? Why were they not lost? Why

were they not stolen?" The curious fact is, jealousy makes in-laws out-laws.

Once a certain man was crushing roses with a mortar and pestle. A philosopher asked them, "Why are you being punished thus?"

One rose gave this reply, "Brother! the world is very jealous. People do not like to see our smiling faces; so they torture us like this but when we were alive we gave our fragrance to people. Even now we are giving fragrance to this man who is crushing us heartlessly. In future also when we assume the form of a scent, we will give fragrance to people."

There is a proverb in Hindi, "The master gives away his wealth in charity but the treasurer grieves over it in polity." When the master himself is giving away his wealth in charity, why should the treasurer feel unhappy about it? Why should he think that it is not proper? The reason is his jealousy. There is a Rajasthāni proverb, "The anguish of others is light but the happiness of others is a blight." It is evident that this is the effect of jealousy. Moral teachers have enumerated four types of unhappy people of whom jealous people are the first.

इष्यो घृणी त्वसंतुष्टः, क्रोधनो नित्यशंकितः ।
परभाग्यं,पजीवीच, षडेते दुःखभागिनः ॥

—महाभारतम् ५/१०५६

Irshyo ghrīṇi tvasantushtāḥ

Krodhano nitya shankitāḥ

Parabhāgyopajīvīcha

Shadete dukhabhāgināḥ

—*Mahābhāratham*

"Jealous people, resentful people, dissatisfied people, angry people, suspicious people and parasitical people—these are the six kinds of people who are always unhappy."

There was a *saiṭhji*. Two scholars came to his house one day. Each was proud of his scholarship. The *saiṭhji*

was greatly amazed by their discussions because each displayed his powers of logical reasoning, to establish his own theories and to repudiate the theories of the other.

Food had been prepared for the scholars so the *saiṭhji* requested the scholars to take a bath and get ready for dinner and told them that after the dinner they could spend the whole day in discussions and disputations happily.

One scholar took a bucket and went to the well to take a bath. The other scholar asked the *saiṭhji* what benefit was there in taking a bath and if the fish that remained in water throughout the day had purity and sanctity and added that one who tried to purify his soul with water was not a scholar but a donkey.

The *saiṭhji* having heard this remark of the scholar went to the well and told the scholar who was taking a bath, how the other scholar had argued with the example of fish to show that it was not possible to purify the soul with water. The *saiṭhji* asked him for his opinion on this point.

That scholar burning with jealousy, said, "He must be a bullock because a bullock does not take a bath of its own accord. Its master has to take it into water by force and wash it. Only human beings know the value of a bath and not a bullock."

From there the *saiṭhji* went towards the kitchen. Having whispered something into the ears of his daughter he came into the sitting room. There were three chairs placed on three sides of the dinner table. The *saiṭhji* sat on one chair and the two scholars sat in the other two chairs.

In accordance with the *saiṭhji*'s instructions, his daughter brought grass in one plate and rice-husks in another plate; and placed them before the two scholars. She placed, before her father, a plate containing food.

The *saiṭhji* said to the scholars, "Please eat it."

Both the scholars felt extremely angry with the *saiṭhji*. They said, "Did you invite us to a dinner?"

The *saiṭhji* said, "Of course, I invited you to a dinner. But I have arranged food for you in accordance with your own introduction of each other." They said, "What introduction is it?" The *saiṭhji* said, "Have you forgotten it so soon? When he was bathing at the well, you said that he was a donkey; and when I went to the well he said that you were a bullock. That is why grass which is the food of a donkey and husk which is the food of a bullock have been placed before you." The two scholars felt ashamed of what they had said and went away.

It is said:

पण्डितो पण्डितं दृष्ट्वा, श्वानवद् गुरुरायते ॥

*Pandito Panditam drishtwā
Shwānawat gurgurāyate*

"One scholar seeing another grunts like a dog."

What is the reason for this? Sheer jealousy. On account of this reason, on that day, the scholars were not only disgraced but they had to remain hungry. Even after hearing such stories of the unhappy consequences of jealousy, why is it that we do not decide to discard jealousy?

Please listen to another example. There was a *shrāvaka* (a pious Jain) by name Hemu. He secured the position of finance minister in the court of a certain emperor.

The emperor used to examine the accounts prepared by the Finance Minister, and if there was any mistake in the accounts, by way of punishing him, he would order him to eat all the pages of the account. Therefore, no one was willing to accept the position of finance minister in his court. Hemu had heard of this. Therefore, he would prepare the account of income and expenditure with great care and then he would read it out to the emperor. One day, he had to go out of station, on some business. So, on that day he gave the responsibility of reading out the accounts before the emperor to a minister in the court, who was older than he. Hemu had also

suggested to that minister, who was afraid of being punished for mistakes in the account, a method of escaping punishment.

The next day, the minister went to the Emperor to read out the accounts. A mistake was discovered by the Emperor. The minister was ordered to eat the pages of the account. He began eating the accounts. The emperor was amazed to see that there were no signs of discomfort or disgust on the face of the minister. When the emperor asked him for the reason, the minister said that according to the suggestion of Hemuji he had written out the accounts on *chapātis* (cakes) which were like papers; and that was why he was eating them happily. There could be no unhappiness in eating cakes.

The emperor praised Hemuji in the presence of all courtiers and on hearing it, they began to burn with jealousy. They said, "We too can give such answers. Kindly test us also."

The emperor said, "Very good. I will ask you a question. Let me see who will give the right answer. I will give the position of Chief Minister to that gentleman who gives me a satisfactory answer. In this proposed contest, Hemuji also may participate. Today, he is on leave. Tomorrow, when he is present, I shall pose the question to him also."

All the scholars said, "Very good, we agree to that. You may kindly ask us the question. We will also try to answer it properly and secure the position of Chief Minister."

The Emperor said, "I wish to know what is it which I can do but God cannot do. Please, give me the right answer." When the scholars heard this question, their faces fell because they could not insult either the emperor or God. It was a difficult problem for them. The answer to the question did not flash to them; yet to safeguard their self-respect they requested the emperor to give them twenty-four hours time. The emperor gave them twenty-four hours to give the right answer. The

scholars spent the whole night reading books to find out an answer to the question. But, they could not find it anywhere. At the end, being tired of searching for the answer, they gave up their effort, and consoled themselves with the thought that Hemuji would be surely caught in this trap because he would be hanged if he, by his answer, insulted either the emperor or God. Atleast thus, they thought they would be free from the thorn of Hemuji's superiority.

With this idea concealed in their minds, they came to the court. The next day Hemuji had already come to the court.

The emperor said to the scholars, "The time-limit of twenty-four hours given to you is over. If anyone has found an answer to my question, he may speak it out." They were all silent because they had not been able to find out an answer to the emperor's question.

At the end the emperor put the same question to Hemuji. Soon after hearing the question, he gave his reply, "Your Highness! You can banish any one from your country but God cannot, because your power is limited to a certain territory but God's power is not limited to any territory. The whole universe is his. If God banishes anyone, where can the banished one go? God cannot send any one out of his universe."

The emperor who was immensely pleased by Hemu's reply, immediately elevated him to the position of Chief Minister from the position of Finance Minister in his court. The position of Finance Minister fell vacant. Some scholar was given that position. The scholars who were jealous of Hemuji's elevation to the position of Chief Minister secretly planned with the Finance Minister and got a proclamation issued by the king. According to it, the Hindus, especially the Jain *shrāvakas* had to pay a heavy tax. Those who failed to pay the tax would be imprisoned. On account of this, a large number of Jain *shrāvakas* had to go to jail. Hemuji who was also a *shrāvaka* was greatly grieved by this. His duty or

dharma was to save those who had been subjected to injustice. So, he began to think of a plan to save the *shrāvakas*. The jealous scholars were thinking that Hemu had been caught in a trap. If Hemu did not do anything to help the *shrāvakas*, they would be angry with him, thinking that in spite of being the Chief Minister, he had not done anything to help them. They would think that he was selfish. But if he did anything to save the *shrāvakas*, he would incur the displeasure of the king and he would be thrown out of his position.

Whenever the emperor went out on a hunting expedition he would leave the royal seal (*rajamudrā*) with the Chief Minister. One day, the emperor went out on a hunting expedition, leaving the royal seal with Hemu. In the emperor's absence, Hemu issued an order under the royal seal, commanding the release of all the prisoners who had been imprisoned for not paying taxes.

No one had the courage to slight or disobey the order issued under the royal seal and in consequence all such prisoners were released from jail.

Soon after the emperor returned from his expedition the jealous courtiers told him, "Your Highness ! In your absence, misusing your royal seal, Hemu has released all the *shrāvakas*. He has committed a great treason and should be punished properly. Please think of the punishment that should be given to him."

The emperor naturally became angry when he heard that his royal seal had been misused by Hemu. He at once sent for the Chief Minister, Hemu, and said in a thundering voice, "You fool, do you think that I gave you the royal seal so that you may release the offenders who had not paid taxes? Do you know, what the consequence will be? You will have to lose not only your position as Chief Minister in our court but also your life for this offence. If you have anything to say in your behalf, speak it out."

Hemu said, "Your Highness! I have eaten your salt and I cannot be unfaithful to you. I cannot think of

any harm to you. Those who had been imprisoned were cursing you. They were praying to God to ruin you and to destroy your power and prosperity. I am your loyal and humble servant. My duty is to safeguard your power and prosperity. Therefore, I ordered the release of those prisoners. After being released they prayed to God to bless you with greater power and prosperity and they began saying, 'Our emperor is magnanimous. May he live long! May he always be our ruler!' Now, you yourself may see what I have done is right or wrong."

On hearing this, the emperor was greatly happy that the prisoners had been released. Moreover, he also enhanced Hemuji's salary. This story illustrates how intelligence can defeat jealousy.

9. BENEVOLENCE

DEAR BENEVOLENT PEOPLE!

Benevolence abides in broad-mindedness but miserliness abides in narrow-mindedness.

अयं निजः परो वेति
गणना लघुचेतसाम् ।
उदारचरितानां तु
वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥

*Ayam Nijah Paro Vetī
Ganaṇā Laghuchetasām
Udāracharitānām tu
Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.*

“Narrow-minded people think, ‘This is mine—this is another’s.’ But those who are benevolent by nature deem the whole world as their family.”

Look at a tree. It gives shelter to animals and birds. It provides shelter and shadow to weary travellers. Even to those who throw stones at it, it extends benevolence by giving them fruits.

Thiruvalluvar has said, “The prosperity of benevolent people is like the prosperity of a tree bearing fruits in the middle of a village.” Just as all people in the village can eat without any impediment the fruits of a tree, all people can enjoy the prosperity of a benevolent one without any impediment.

True benevolence does not lie in giving away one’s wealth thoughtlessly. It lies in giving away one’s wealth in charity to those who deserve help. Extravagant expenditure is not benevolence. Benevolence is different from

extravagance. True benevolence lies in extending help to those who need it.

Benevolence impels a man to shed tears of compassion even for an offender. "Blessed are the eyes of Lord Mahāvira which shed tears of compassion for the offender called Sangama, who was causing endless difficulties, and impediments." Here, the Lord shed tears not because of the difficulties caused to him by the offender but because he was deeply grieved to think that the offender would suffer a spiritual disaster; that he would be condemned to hell where he would have to experience endless torture and misery. Behind his tears, there lay the feelings of kindness, kindliness, affection and benevolence.

A man who is benevolent is by nature a benefactor who extends his benefactions with a spontaneous magnanimity.

Bartrihari says this while describing the cause for the benevolence of a benefactor.

उत्पादिता स्वयमियं यदि तत्तनूजा
तातेन वा यदि तदा भगिनी खलु श्रीः ।
यद्यन्य संगमवती च तदा परस्त्री
तत्यागबद्धमनसः सुधियो भवन्ति ॥

*Utpādītā Swayamiyam Yadi Tattanuḥ
Tatena va yadi tadā Bhagini khalu Shriḥ
Yadyanya Sangamavati cha tadā parastrī
Tatyāgabaddamanasah Sudhiyo Bhavanti.*

"If we produce wealth, (*Lakshmi*)—the Goddess of Wealth by our own efforts, she is our daughter. If wealth (*Lakshmi*) was produced by our father that is if we have inherited wealth from our father, she (wealth) is our sister. If wealth belongs to others she is a *parasthri* (a woman belonging to another man). Therefore, sensible people always think of renouncing wealth."

Benevolent people do not wait until the needy persons ask for help. They voluntarily help them. If they come to know that someone is in need of help, they hasten to help them.

Blessed are those that satisfy the needs of the needy by realising their need from their very appearance. They do not wait for others' suggestions. Only those who give away their wealth in charity and enjoy their wealth are really wealthy. "If a man can be wealthy with the money which is not given away in charity or which is not enjoyed by him, then with the same wealth, we too can feel that we are wealthy." In other words, there is no difference between a poor man and a wealthy man who does not enjoy or give away his wealth in charity.

The man who does not enjoy his wealth or who does not give away his wealth in charity is a miser. A poet expresses surprise at the behaviour of such a miser thus, "If a miser does not give away his wealth, does it mean that the wealth has surrendered itself to him? If a miser does not enjoy his wealth does it mean that it can kill like poison?"

Though a miser may have wealth, he does not have benevolence. A poor man may be benevolent but he cannot exercise his benevolence because he has nothing to give away. A poor poet offered this prayer to Brahmā, "Oh Vidhātā! (Oh Giver of Everything) If you like to give me wealth, don't give wealth to me. Kindly give to the affluent the benevolence that is there in my heart (This is enough, this would make everything all right)."

What is the similarity between a miser and a benevolent man? Here is a *subhāshita* which illustrates the truth of the proverb "The poet sees what even the sun cannot see."

लुब्धो न विसृजत्यर्थं

नरो दारिद्र्यशंकया ।

दातापि विसृजत्यर्थं

न नु तेनैव शंकया ॥

—कुवलयानन्द

Lubdho na visrujatyartham

Naro dāridryasankayā

Dātāpi visrujatyartham

Na nu tenaiva śankayā?

—*Kuvalyananda*

A miser does not give away his wealth in charity fearing poverty. But with the same fear of poverty even a benefactor gives away his wealth in charity.

A benefactor thinks that he is wealthy in this life because of the benefactions rendered by him in his previous life (*poorva janma*) and that if he does not help others in this life, he would be poor in his next life. A poet has composed a poem about a miser stating that he is the greatest benefactor. "There has never been and never will be a benefactor greater than a miser because he gives away his wealth to others even without touching it, that is, without spending even a bit of it. The implication is that he does not give his wealth to others with his own hands but after his death his wealth is taken away by others. The miser puts by his money penny by penny (he goes on saving pie by pie). But it is enjoyed by others. In a *subhāshita*, a poet says, "A man who has wealth and who does not give it away to others is the greatest fool on the earth because, he experiences great anxieties and agonies to earn money; to take care of it and suffers great grief when it is stolen." Even Mother Earth feels that such misers are a burden to her. Sri Harsha has written the following poem expressing this idea:

याचमान-जन-मानसवृत्तेः

पूरणाय बत जन्म न यस्य

तेन भूमिरतिभारवतीयम्

न द्रुमैर्न गिरिभिर्न समुद्रेः

—नैषधीय चरितम्

Yāchamāna-Jana-Mānasavriteh

Puranā ya Bata Janma na yasya

Tena Bhoomiratibhārvatiyam

Na drumairna giribhihirna samudraih

—*Naishadheeya Chāritam*

"The earth is burdened by those whose life is not dedicated to the objective of satisfying the desires of the needy; not by trees or mountains or seas."

A benevolent man thinks that his happiness lies in the happiness of others. "The best way to do good to ourselves is to do good to others. The right way to gather is to scatter."

The best way to attain spiritual welfare is to seek the welfare of others. The best way to put by is to give away.

The great Sanskrit poet, Māgha, born in Gujarat, is famous more for his splendid magnanimity than for his poetic genius. As a poet he was great but he was also a man of very great benevolence. The name of his wife was Lakshmi. It has been said:

तस्याभूद् गेहिनी लक्ष्मी-
लक्ष्मीर्लक्ष्मीपतेरिव ॥

*Tasyābhūd Gehinī Lakshmiḥ
Lakshmiṛlakshmiṣpateriva*

"The wife of the poet, Māgha was named Lakshmi and she was like Lakshmi, the divine consort of Vishnu."

In benevolence, she was not in any way inferior to her husband.

One day, a poor man came to their house and prayed, "Lord! I have to perform the marriage of my daughter. If you could give some help to me, I would deem it a mark of extreme kindness. I have come from a great distance hearing about your benevolent nature." On that day, the great poet had not even a single gold coin with him to give it to the man. But it was against his nature to disappoint a suppliant. He got up and went into the house and at that time his wife was lying on the cot. She was about to sleep. Slowly, he took out a gold bangle from one of her hands and gave it to the poor man. While he was removing the bangle, she woke up completely but she shut her eyes and pretended to be sleeping, to see what her husband would do with the bangle. The poet gave the bangle to the poor man and said, "You can sell this bangle and perform your daughter's marriage." Realising what her husband had done, Lakshmi Devi came out and addressing the poor man

who was turning back, said, "Please wait! Take this bangle also. How can you celebrate the marriage of your daughter with one bangle?" Saying this, she removed the bangle which was on her other hand and gave it to him happily. The poor man saluting both gratefully went away. He thought about the incident on his way. However much he thought about it, he could not decide whose generosity was greater; the poet's or his wife's.

In those days, there appeared a severe famine in Gujarat. A time of famine is also called *durbhikshā*. (*Bhikshā* means alms. The time when it is difficult to get even alms is called *durbhikshā*.) Greatly grieved by that time of famine or *durbhikshā*, Māgha said to his wife:

ना भिक्षा दुर्भिक्षे पतति दुरवस्थाः कथमृणम्
लभन्ते कर्माणि द्विजपरिवृढान्कारयतिकः ?
अदत्तैव ग्रासं ग्रहपतिरसावस्तमयते
क्व यामः ? किं कुर्मो ? गृहिणि ! गहनो जीवनविधिः

*Nā Bhikshā durbhikshe patati durvasthāḥ kathamṛnam
Labhante karmāṇi dwijaparivṛḍhāṅkārayatikaḥ ?
Adatvaiva grāsam grahapatirasāvastamayate
Kva yāmah ? kim kurmo ? Gṛihini ! Gahano Jeevana vidhiḥ.*

"In this time of *durbhikshā* even *bhikshā* (alms) cannot be secured. How can poor people like us get loans? (A loan cannot be obtained. If we could get a loan we could pass some days spending that money.) People will not employ perfect *brahmins* like us to do work (otherwise by doing some job we could have managed to live). The sun is setting without giving us food. (That means they were without food for the whole day.) Where shall we go? What shall we do? Oh wife! It is very difficult to keep the body and soul together."

On hearing this, his wife suggested that they should leave Gujarat and go away to Dhārānagari. Bhoja was renowned for his benevolence and he honoured poets greatly. So she suggested that they should go to Dhārānagari and live happily. The poet accepted her suggestion. Accordingly they went to Dhārānagari and settled

down in a garden outside the city. The next day the great poet sent a *śloka* (a poem) to King Bhoja by his wife. The king read the poem.

कुमुदवनमपश्चि श्रीमदम्भोजखण्डम्
 त्यजति मुदमुलूकः प्रीतिमाश्चक्रवाकः ।
 उदयमहिमरश्मिर्याति शंतांशुरस्तम्
 हतविधिलसितानां ही विचित्रविपाकः ॥

—शिशुपालवधम्

*Kumūdavanamapashri Srimādambhojakhandaṁ
 Tyajati Mudamulukāḥ Pṛīmānshchakravākāḥ
 Udayamahimarashmiryanti Śantānśurastam
 Hatavidilasitanām hi Vichitrovipākāḥ.*

—Shishupalavadham

“The Kumuda flowers, the flowers that bloom in moonlight, have faded; the sunflowers, that bloom at dawn are smiling and opening their faces and are graceful and beautiful. The cheerfulness of the owl is disappearing (because it can see things only in the night); and the Chakravaka bird is cheerful and happy; the sun is rising and the moon is setting. The lot of those who are in misfortune is really strange.”

In this *śloka* (stanza) under the pretext of describing the dawn, the poet by means of subtle and highly suggestive symbolism conveyed to the king that he (the king) was in prosperity; and that they (the poet and his wife) were in adversity; that he ate delicious and rich food and lived in luxury while they were suffering the agonies of hunger and poverty. In this manner, he placed before the king indirectly, his agony and sorrow. The stanza gave an expression at the same time to surprise and sorrow. The *avyaya* (the adjunct) ‘ही’ (hi) used in the poem was an excellent *pun* suggestive of surprise as well as sorrow; and the cleverness of the *pun* pleased the king immensely because he had a fine taste for excellences in poetry. The king was pleased by the employment of the expression ही (hi) and at once he gave

Lakshmidēvi one lakh gold coins as a reward to the poet and told her that he would call on the poet the next day.

Lakshmidēvi requested some servant there to carry the bag and when she was returning home, accompanied by the servant, she saw on the way a number of beggars. She gave plenty of coins to each beggar on the way with both her hands by way of charity. The result was that by the time she reached the garden, there was not a single coin left in the bag.

The poet asked her, "Was not the king Bhoja pleased by my poem?" Lakshmidēvi replied, "Who would not appreciate your poem? The king Bhoja read the poem and was delighted by it. He also promised to visit you tomorrow." The poet said, "You say he was so greatly delighted by my poem. Did he not give any reward? We have heard that king Bhoja rewards poets generously "प्रत्यक्षरं लक्षमदत्त भोजः ।" (*Pratyaksharam Lakshmadatta Bhojah.*) King Bhoja gives one lakh for every word of a poem which he appreciates. Did he not give you anything?" She replied, "Why not? He gave me one lakh gold coins filled in this bag. But, on the way many beggars mentioning your name begged for help and I gave plenty of coins to each of them and now there is not a single coin in the bag." Māgha said joyfully, "Very good! I am very happy to hear it. You are really fit to be my wife. A wife is a *sahadharmini* (one who shares the *dharma* or the ethical and religious principles of her husband). She should observe the same principles as her husband. My *dharma* or principle is charity. You have carried out the duty of a *sahadharmini* by acting according to my *dharma* or principle. We have been hungry for several days, if we are hungry for one more day no mountain will crumble to the earth. To extinguish the fire of adversity, we have the water of contentment and happiness, that is real wealth. Your magnanimity has filled me with an indescribable felicity. But then, there is one grief:

G.S.-7

दरिद्रानलसंतपः

शान्तः सन्तोषवारिणा ।

याचकाशा विधातान्त-

दहिः केनोपशाम्यसु ?

Dāridryānalasantāpah

Shāntah Santoshavāriṇā

Yāchakāshā Vidhātānta

Dahih Kenopashāmyatu?

The fire of our adversity is extinguished by the water of contentment and happiness. But, by what means can we pacify the *sorrow* that appears on account of our inability to fulfil the desires of the beggars or people that come to our doors. We cannot think of any means by which we can pacify that sorrow.

The next day, King Bhoja called on the poet. At that time, Māgha was composing a great work called *Shishupālavadham*. He read out a canto of that poem to the king. The King Bhoja was greatly delighted by it. He ordered a beautiful building to be built in the garden and when it was built, he entreated the poet to live in it and to continue the composition of his work without any care or worry. He said to the poet, "This one poem will spread your fame to the ends of the world; your fame will be immortal in this world and you will always occupy an elevated place in the hearts of Sanskrit poets and lovers of poetry."

Having said this and saluting the poet respectfully, the king returned to his palace.

Some days later, Māgha said to his wife:

क्षुतक्षामः पथिकं मदीयभवनं

पृच्छन् कुतं ऽप्यागतः

तत्किं गेहिनि ! किञ्चिदस्ति यदयं

भुङ्क्ते बुभुक्षानुरः ?

*Kshutakshāmah pathiko madīyabhavanam
Prichchan Kutopyāgataḥ
Tatkim gehini Kinchidasti yadayam
Bhunkte bubhukshāturaḥ.*

“Travellers, famished with hunger, have come from somewhere asking for my house. Oh mistress of the house! Is there any food in the house which can be given to these hungry people?”

His wife gave this reply:

वाचास्तीत्यभिधाय नास्ति च पुनः
प्रोक्तं विनैवाक्षरैः ।
स्थूल स्थूल विलोल लं चनभवै—
बाष्पाम्भसां बिन्दुभिः ॥

*Vāchāstityabhidāya nāsticha punaḥ
Proktaṁ Vinaiṅāksharaiḥ
Sthula Sthula Vilola Lochanabhavaḥ
Bāshpāmbhasām bindubhiḥ.*

“She said, “Yes, by word; without saying ‘no’. She said it with drops of tears falling from her long eyes moved by sorrow.”

She had not uttered the word ‘no’ at any time because of her generosity.

Observing this reaction of his wife, the poet said,

अर्था न सन्ति न च मुञ्चति मां दुराशा
त्यागान्न संकुचति दुर्ललितं मनो मे ।
याच्ञा च लाघवकरी स्ववधेच पापम्
प्राणाः ! स्वयं व्रजत किं नु विलम्बितेन ?

*Arthā Na Santhi na cha Munchati Mam Durāshā
Tyāgāna Sankuchati durlalitaṁ Mano Me!
Yachcha Cha Lāghavakari Swavadhecha Pāpam
Prāṅāḥ! Swayam Vrajata Kim nu Vilambitena?*

“I do not have money with me but cupidity clings to me. (In my mind, there is the desire that people would admire my poetry and present me with money.) My mind

which is spoilt by affection for others never contracts at the thought of benevolence. If I beg others for money it will demean me and I lose my self-respect. Committing suicide is a sin. Therefore, Oh life! You yourself get away from me. What is the use of your delaying?"

Hearing his words, expressive of his helplessness, the hungry people went away quietly. The following *sloka* emerged from the poet's heart when he saw them going away:

व्रजत व्रजत प्राणाः

अर्थिनि व्यर्थतांगते ।

पश्चादपि हि गन्तव्यम्

क्व सार्थः पुनरीदृशः ?

Vrajata vrajata prāṇāḥ

Arthini Vyarthatāṅgate!

Paschādapi hi Gantavyam

Kva sārthaḥ Punaridrushaḥ

“Oh life! You too get away from me because the (*yāchakas*) suppliants have gone away disappointed. You have to go away from me (if not today) sometime later (when the destined moment comes). But will you have such a good company then?”

In fact, the great poet breathed his last after he uttered this last *sloka*. We cannot find such an example of benevolence in the whole world even if we search for it with a light in our hands. That is what I think. Even a hundredth of such benevolence would fill the whole world with the fragrance of felicity.

10. DUTY

DEAR LOVERS OF DUTY!

The real objective implied in all lofty ethical principles and virtues is dutifulness or acting according to the voice of Duty. Mahatma Gandhi has said:

“कर्तव्य में मधुरता है ।”

Kartavya Me Madhurata Hai.

“There is sweetness in doing our duty.”

Those who have experienced this sweetness always do their duty sincerely. In case, there arises a conflict between our sense of duty and our love for someone, they prefer only duty to love. They sacrifice love on the altar of duty. They do not think of the fruits or results because they take delight in doing their duty. If we take a look at the various objects of nature, we find that each of them is doing its duty. The earth carries with patience all creatures and objects. Water quenches the thirst of all, fire helps us to cook our food. Air helps all people to keep themselves alive through respiration. Trees give us fruits and shelter or shade. The moon driving away darkness shines in the night. The sun spreading his radiance everywhere, keeps all beings awake and active; but why is it that only man sits idly with his hands folded? Man should also carry out his duty. If we carry out our duty with sincerity our future will be bright and blissful. By combining the root verb (कृ) (kri) and the *avyaya* (tavya) (तव्य) the word *kartavya* or duty has been coined and it means duty is that which ought to be done by us.

What is it that we ought to do? There can be no single answer to this question because the answer to the

question depends on the circumstances in which the question arises. Since circumstances differ the concept of duty also differs from one situation to another. For example, there is the rule

गन्तव्यम् राजपथे ॥

Gantavyam Rajapathe

“Walk on the *rajamārga* or the public road.”

But, according to Sri Harsha, there is an exemption to this rule. He says,

घनाम्बुना राजपथे हि पिच्छले ।

क्वचिद्बुधैरप्यपथेन गम्यते ॥

—नैषधोय चरितम्

Ghanāmbhunā Rajapathe hi picchile

Kvachidbudhairapyapathena gamyate.)

“If the public road has become slimy and slippery on account of rain, even scholars sometimes leave the public roads or the highways and walk on by-ways.”

Giving up something is also a duty. But what should be given up? Why should it be given up? These are the crucial questions. An answer to these questions is found in the *Chānakya Nīti*, “Give up or discard charity (*dharma*) which is not prompted by kindness. Discard your teacher who is not enlightened. Discard your wife who always frowns with anger and discard your relatives who do not love you.”

It is our duty to act according to *dharma* or the principles of religion but we should do away with the religion that encourages cruelty as exemplified by such things as sacrificing animals at a *yajna*; or killing sheep or goats to appease some goddess or killing buffaloes etc.

Serving your preceptor is a duty. But, if a preceptor is not a scholar; if he cannot answer your questions; if he is always unable to answer the questions of those who thirst for knowledge, it is your duty to discard such a preceptor.

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It is your duty to take care of your wife but if she is a woman of an impetuous temper, if she always gets angry for every thing, and if she keeps frowning throughout the day, and if she begins quarrelling for every small thing, it is your duty to give up such a wife.

In the same manner, it has been suggested that we should discard our relatives if they do not love us.

आब नहीं आदर नहीं, नहीं नयन में नेह ।
 'तुलसी' तहाँ न जाइये, कंचन बरसे मेह ॥
Āba nahim ādar nahim
nahim nayan me neh
 'Tulasi' tahā na jaiye
Kanchana barase meh.

"Tulasi! Do not go to a place where you do not see the light of love and respect in the eyes of the people even if, a rain of gold pours down there."

In the *Nitivakyamrita* the following duties are prescribed:

त्रीण्यवश्यं भर्तव्यानि माता
 कलत्रमप्राप्तव्यवहारानि चापत्यानि
Trīṇyavashyam bhartavyāni mātā
Kalatramapṛāptavyavahārāṇi Chāpatyāni

"One must take care of one's mother, wife and children until they grow up to stand on their own feet. That is, until the children can depend on themselves."

आयानुरूपो व्ययः कार्यः ॥
Āyānurupo Vyayaḥ Kāryaḥ

"We should spend according to our income; that is we should not spend more than what we earn."

There is a proverb in Hindi also,

"ते ते पांव पसारिये
 जेति लम्बी सौर ॥"
Te te pamv pasāriye
Jeti lambi saur.

“Stretch your legs to the extent of your cloth or bed.”

If we stretch our legs beyond the limit of our bed, our legs will be on the floor. This means, we should spend within our means. If we take anything on credit, the article will be cheap in quality but expensive in price. But if we pay cash we get articles of good quality at a lower price because when we pay cash, we need not confine our choice to one shop; we can go to several shops and buy the article where its quality is high and the price is low.

धनश्रद्धानुरूपस्यागोजुसत्तव्यः ॥

Dhanashraddhānurūpastyāgonusarttavayah.

“We should give charity to others in accordance with our wealth and faith in charity.”

The meaning of this is that the extent of our generosity should be such that, it should not upset the economy of our own home. Kabir says, “Oh God! Give out of thy bounty so much as would suffice the needs of the whole family. I should not be hungry. *Sādhus* also should not go away hungry from my door.”

To remove the cold that is afflicting others, you need not burn your roof. Charity or benevolence if it is inspired by emotional intensity, will impel us to part with more than what we can afford. Therefore, it is necessary that restraint should be exercised on this kind of intensity of emotional propensity.

प्रतिपाद्यानुरूपं वचनमुदाहर्तव्यम् ॥

Pratipādyānurūpam Vachanamudāhartavyam.

“Your speech must be relevant to the proposed subject.”

A skilled speaker is he who expounds his ideas fully and effectively, whose words support his projected theories and who does not indulge in meaningless verbiage. Only such a speaker is liked by the audience. Only such a speaker wins the hearts of the listeners and is honoured everywhere. It is said, “Only he is fit to speak in a

congregation, who can win the minds and hearts of his own people, others, scholars, jealous people and even unlettered people.” There should be sweetness in the voice of the speaker, if the voice of the speaker is harsh, it keeps away even friends because

अग्निदाहदपि विशिष्टं वाक्यपरूष्यम्

Agnidāhadapi Vishishtam Vākyaṣārūshyam.

“A harsh voice burns more than fire can.”

If fire causes a burn injury, it can be bandaged and cured but the injury caused by a voice that is harsh cannot be cured. *Santa* Tulsidas says, “You may use your sword to attack others because the injury caused by the sword can be cured but never utter an angry word. Speak, after thinking carefully such words as are sweet to hear and agreeable to others.” Another poet has said that the voice of the speaker becomes cruel on account of arrogance and that, therefore we should discard arrogance and speak in a humble manner. Gentle speech brings peace to the speaker and to the listener, we should cultivate the skill of speaking thus. Skill is essential in performing every activity in life. It is said in the *Bhagavad Gītā* :

योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥

Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam

“You must carry out your duties with dexterity.”

The great Russian writer Tolstoy says that the life of a man is a battle-field. The implication is that man should live his life with as much carefulness as is necessary to fight on a battle-field. The following example illustrates the truth of this statement.

Those were the days when the British were ruling over India. A horse belonging to an English Officer had been lost. Ordered by the officer, some soldiers were going up and down the roads of the city in search of the horse. They asked a shopkeeper, “Did a horse come this way?”

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Sympathising with them, the shop-keeper gave them a truthful answer, "Yes, I saw a horse going this way sometime ago." The soldiers said sternly, "Come with us, and show us where the horse turned and into which lane it went."

The shop-keeper did not like to go with them leaving the shop unattended. He was alone in the shop. He explained his difficulty to them. But, in those days, the soldiers thought that they were not inferior to their officers and so they were angry. They were four in number and carried *lāthis* in their hands. They said angrily, "You must come with us. Otherwise, we will beat you with our *lāthis* so that all the bones in your body, would break to pieces."

The merchant thought that the soldiers had not appreciated his truthfulness. On the contrary, they had begun to threaten him. He thought, "These people do not care for others' convenience or inconvenience. They seek only their selfish objectives. Therefore, I should somehow escape from them." Having thought thus he said to the soldiers, "Very good, I will come with you. But please tell me if the horse, you are searching for is a white one." The soldiers at once said, "Yes, yes, it is white in colour." The merchant said, "Does it have two long horns on its head?" The soldiers said laughing, "Horns? You fool! Horses do not have horns, you must have seen an ox." Saying this the soldiers went away thinking that the shop-keeper must have seen only an ox. The merchant sighed with relief. He used his skill and cleverness to safeguard his interest. By fooling those arrogant soldiers, he rectified his own foolishness.

Those people who desire to attain spiritual welfare must keep their vision pure and perfect. They should be able to see their own faults and the merits of others.

The following incident took place in a place called *Ṭwaraka*. One day, a dead dog was lying on a road. Just at that time, Sri Krishna and the Pāṇdavas happened to be passing by. The body of the dog had become rotten and worms were wriggling all over its body. The Pān-

davas, unable to bear the foul smell closed their nostrils with their handkerchiefs and went ahead. But, Srikrishna stood near the dead dog for sometime and then walked on cheerfully. When the Pāndavas asked him why he smiled happily seeing the dead dog, he said, "I was looking at the teeth of the dog. How white and bright they are! How full of lustre! They are so full of lustre that they seem to be pearls. When I kept gazing at the teeth of the dog, I never thought of the foul smell. My mind was concentrated on its teeth." The moral of this story is that wisdom lies in looking at the brighter side of life and to take delight in it, and that it is foolish and unwise to see only the darker side of life and to keep lamenting over it.

Nirmal and Vimal were brothers. One day, they were walking about in a garden. Some time later, Nirmal went home weeping. Kamaladevi, his mother, asked him, "What happened? Did you walk on a thorn?"

Nirmal said, "No, mother!"

Kamala said, "Why are you weeping?"

Nirmal said, "Mother, the garden is very bad. I saw a rose plant. How beautiful the roses were! But beneath the flowers there were sharp thorns. That made me sorrowful."

While the mother was trying to console him in his distress, Vimal came laughing. When she asked him why he was laughing he said, "Mother! the garden is excellent. There I saw beautiful roses blooming and smiling in spite of the sharp thorns that surrounded them. We too should be cheerful like that. Should not we, mother?" The mother embraced both the boys and realised that our view should be optimistic like that of Vimal, not pessimistic like that of Nirmal.

Seeing the same object one weeps and another laughs. We should adopt the latter point of view. We should not see the thorns beneath the flowers but we should see the flowers above the thorns. This kind of attitude brings us happiness and spiritual welfare and we should use

this method of looking at things. The profession of pleading depends on one's intellectual powers or intelligence. Pleading is intended to safeguard the interests of innocent people. But a selfish lawyer may use his powers of pleading and advocacy to safeguard the interests of the guilty people also because he can get more money from the guilty people. When Mahatma Gandhi became a barrister he vowed never to accept a false case. He would accept only just cases—a just case is one in which an innocent man has suffered some injustice and it is the duty of every honest lawyer to safeguard the interests of an innocent person.

Just as it is our duty to safeguard the innocent, it is also our duty to see that the guilty are punished.

The following incident took place in England. A man had committed a murder. The wife of the deceased filed a case in the Session's Court. Since there was no evidence against him, the murderer was acquitted. The woman appealed to the High Court. Even there she had to face a defeat, because the murderer was acquitted for want of evidence.

But the woman did not give way to despair. She was very affluent. She would never rest satisfied until the murderer was duly punished. She contacted many eminent advocates to pursue the case further by means of an appeal but in spite of the offer of a heavy fee no advocate was willing to take up the case, because they thought that since she had lost her case both in the Sessions Court and in the High Court for want of evidence, the case would fail in future also and that if they accepted the case, their name and fame would be affected and it would also affect their future practice.

At the end, someone suggested to her the name of Pandit Motilal Nehru. He was of course an Indian and if he was invited the advocates in England might feel insulted but what could the woman do? She wanted to try even this last method. She invited Pandit Motilal Nehru. She assured him that she would pay him as much

fee as he demanded besides paying his travel expenses. The case had gone up to the Privy Council. Pandit Motilal Nehru also went there. The file relating to the case was given to him but he returned it without seeing it.

The hearing began. Pandit Motilal went to the Court every day and sat quietly hearing and observing all that was being said and done but he said nothing. The barristers there thought that the poor Indian barrister was unable to do anything and that since no argument flashed to him, he sat silent. The woman also was greatly worried because, the case had reached its final stage and beyond that she could appeal only to God.

The judge announced, "This is the final stage of hearing. If any one has anything to say on behalf of any one involved in the case, he may speak out. The judgement will be given tomorrow." On hearing this, the woman and her sympathisers looked at Pandit Motilal Nehru hopefully. But, all were disappointed because he sat mute like a statue.

The next day the judge announced his decision, which had been fully prepared. The murderer was declared innocent and his acquittal was ordered. The widow's face turned pale with bitter disappointment and sorrow. The tears flowed from her eyes. Just then, Pandit Motilal got up from his chair. He went slowly towards the box in which the murderer was standing.

The murderer was in a mood of great elation because he had escaped punishment. Pandit Motilal shook hands with him, and congratulated him saying, "By God's grace you have been declared innocent. In future, never commit such an offence. Please remember this." The murderer said, "I am not a fool to commit such a serious offence again." All heard this statement. Pandit Motilal said in a loud voice, "My Lord, do you need evidence even now? The offender himself has confessed his crime."

The situation became reversed. Law depends on evidence. In this case, the offender himself had given evidence; he himself had acted as a witness. The judge at

once condemned the offender to be hanged. The woman was greatly delighted. The barristers of England deemed this as a victory achieved by Indian intelligence. Thus, Pandit Motilal brought glory to his country.

This is the right way to use our intelligence. To use our intelligence in this manner we require calmness and concentration. If the mind is in a state of delusion, the power of reasoning becomes dormant or paralysed.

Many people come to listen to discourses but happily they begin sleeping or dozing. In their half asleep state, if anything falls on their ears, they misunderstand its import. Here is an amusing example. The incident occurred in the case of the mother of a doctor. She used to come to listen to the discourses punctually and regularly. One day the Gurudev said aloud, quoting the words of Lord Mahāvira,

“समयं गीयम ! मा पमायए ॥”

Samayam Goyama Mā Pamāyae

“Oh Gautam! Be alert. Do not be indifferent even for a moment.”

The old woman woke up from her state of trance a little and again fell asleep. She never understood what the Gurudev was saying in his discourse. She heard only the words, “Goyama”, and thought that the Gurudev was suffering from some pain and that he was crying out, “Oyamma!” which means, “Oh mother!”—a cry that is uttered in pain. The next day she told her son, who was a doctor, “You are a big doctor and you are curing diseases of people but sometimes you must also render service to others. Such benevolence will bring you much spiritual benefit.” The doctor said, “Mother, who is in need of help? Whom shall I treat? If there is any sick person in your knowledge tell me, I will treat him without taking money from him, I will treat him without asking for any fee.” The old woman said, “In our town, the Jain *Sādhus* are performing the austerity of *Chaturmās*. (The Jain ascetics stay for the four months of the rainy

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season in some place and perform some austerities and deliver discourses.) Of those *sādhus* (ascetics), one has been delivering discourses on the *shāstras* (sacred books). I think he is suffering from stomachache because while speaking, he suddenly cried out, 'Oyamma'."

The doctor went to *Upāshraya* (the shelter of the Jain monks) and examined the pulse of the Gurudev. His pulse was perfectly alright. He also found out that the Gurudev was not suffering from stomachache or any other ailment. The doctor was amazed and said to the Gurudev, "My mother told me that while delivering the discourse yesterday you cried out 'Oyamma'. Actually, she sent me here."

Then smiling, the Gurudev explained to the doctor the secret that in her state of trance, his mother had misheard the words. People should be mentally alert while listening to discourse. This is the duty of those who come to listen to discourses.

11. DEAR PEOPLE THAT ADORE YOUR PRECEPTOR

DEAR PEOPLE THAT ADORE YOUR PRECEPTOR !

In the *Namaskāramahāmantra* (the holy hymn of incantation) the preceptor or *Arihanta* has been saluted before *Paramātmā* or *Siddhadeva*. Kabir says, “If God and Preceptor both stand before us, we experience a serious conflict. The Preceptor is a benefactor and God is great and is to be given a greater adoration than is given to the Preceptor. In such a situation, whom should we salute first?”

Kabir says, “Those who adore Gurudev and realise God recognise the greatness of the Preceptor.” In Kabir’s view, those who do not realise the greatness of the Preceptors are blind though they may have eyes. Their inner eye is blinded. In Rajasthān, such people are called *Hiyaphoota* (those whose inward eye has been blinded). Kabir says, “If God is angry with us, we can hold the holy feet of the Gurumahādev and seek his protection but if the Gurumahādev is angry with us, where shall we go for protection and whose feet shall we hold in supplication? Who shall save us?” Here the greatness of the teacher has been described in accordance with the Hindu religion because Hinduism had influenced Kabir.

But, according to Jainism neither the Preceptor nor God becomes angry with any one because both are above all passions. Therefore, like Kabir you need not shiver with fear imagining such anger in the teacher or God but it is necessary to realise and acknowledge the greatness of the word *Gurumahādev*. The cataract of knowledge and wisdom flows down from the *Gurumahādev*. From him, you can get answers to your questions. The problems of those who thirst for knowledge are solved by him. He provides solutions to your problems. He shows

you the way to salvation. Therefore, it is enough if you realise the greatness of your Preceptor.

यह तन विष की बेलडो,
गुरु अमृत की खान ।
सीस दियाँ जो गुरु मिले
तो भी सस्ता जान ॥

*Yaha tana vish ki beladi
Guru amrit ki khān
Sisa diyāṁ jo Guru mile
To bhi sastā jān*

“This body is a poisonous creeper. The *Guru Mahāraj* is the mine of nectar or *amrit*. If we get a *Guru* we can give even our head (life) and even that is a cheap price for such a precious thing.”

The *Dohā* (stanza) written by Kabir inspires in the readers devotion for their Preceptor.

We can pose questions to our Preceptor but remember that if the questions are intended to exhibit your knowledge, you cannot attain any self-realisation. Lord Mahāvira and Sri Krishna did not ask any questions; they merely answered the questions posed by Gautama Swami and Arjuna. This is what we have heard and known. But the point is whether any questions did not arise in the minds of these great men who gave such splendid answers to the questions put to them. Certainly, questions would have arisen in their minds, but they would have found answers to their questions in their own minds where the questions arose. If the mind is free from passions and if it is pure then it will provide answers to your questions and clarifications for your doubts. We can see the world with our physical eyes, but we can see our soul only with our mental eyes.

The seer's view should be subtle and incisive. It must concern itself with the soul, not with the body. How many words are there in the *Koran*? What is the number of *ślokas* (stanzas) in the *Bhagavad Gītā*? Into G.S.—8

which languages has the Bible been translated? These are peripheral questions because they are not concerned with the essence, namely, *atmakalyāna* or spiritual prosperity. What is the essence of these sacred books? What is their objective? What is the content of these books? What doctrines are expounded in these books? These are the questions that should be asked.

The *Sādhus* give this reply:

साध्नोति स्वपरहितानिकार्याणीति साधुः ॥

Sadhnoti swaparahitānikāryāṇīti sādhuḥ.

“*Sādhus* are those who achieve their own and others’ welfare.”

They pursue the path of salvation themselves and inspire others to walk upon that path. They are called *Munis* (those who observe silence as a ritual) because even through their silence they communicate their messages. There is eloquence in their silence. Communication of lofty spiritual messages need not be articulated. They can be conveyed even through silence.

The *Guru* or the Preceptor communicates his doctrines and messages through his silence; and the doubts of the disciples are cleared. Those people are called *sādhus*, who possess tolerance, who possess a spirit of cooperation and who readily and willingly extend their help to others. A pillar of iron sinks into water but if it is beaten by means of hammers and shaped into a ship, in that form it floats on water. The *sādhus* using their discourses as hammers beat their disciples, devotees, followers, *shrāvaks* and *shrāvikas* and shape them into ships which can cross the ocean of *samsāra*.

A *sādhu* is like an engineer because he builds life, creates spiritual propensities in human beings, renders them pure and sublime and ennobles them.

A *sādhu* is like an advocate because by means of his skill and intelligence he endeavours to release *jivas* (living beings who are imprisoned in *samsāra*).

A *sādhu* is like a doctor because he remedies the maladies that afflict the minds of people and nurses them so that they may get spiritual health.

A *sādhu* is like a postman because he goes to every door and communicates the message of Lord Mahāvira.

There are five factors that can cause the fall of a *sādhu* or affect the purity and nobility of his life. They are : (1) **discourses**, (2) **familiarity**, (3) **newspapers**, (4) **fame** and (5) **flattery**.

A *sādhu* may become proud of himself thinking that his discourses are excellent. Listeners may think that he is a great scholar but true knowledge is that which is devoid of pride. The great poet Tulasi Dās has said:

ज्ञान मान जहँ एकहुँ नाही ॥

Gnān mān jahāñ ekahu nāhīm.

(Knowledge and pride do not abide together.)

The second cause for the fall of a *sādhu* is familiarity. Too much of familiarity with *grihasthas* (householders) is not good for *sādhus*. A *sādhu* requires as much care and caution in his contacts and dealings with householders as a doctor takes when he goes to attend on T.B. patients. In the absence of such caution, the doctor himself may get the disease.

If *sādhus* read newspapers, they would be wasting their precious time that should be given to the study of sacred books. Moreover, a *sādhu* becomes famous if his name is printed in the newspaper. Love of fame acts like an intoxication. Just as a drinker, keeps drinking liquors off and on a *sādhu* desires to see his name printed in newspapers off and on. The readers praise the *sādhu* when they see his name in the newspapers. All people love praise and flattery. Just as the senses are interested in sensual delights, the mind becomes interested in praise and flattery. Love of flattery causes a moral fall.

On account of these five causes, the *sādhu's* life of purity and self-discipline is polluted. *Sādhus* must try

to keep away from these influences. A *sādhū* or an ascetic can only describe his experience of spiritual bliss. But, he cannot give that experience to others. You must experience it by means of your own efforts.

Here is an example which illustrates how difficult it is to make others share an experience.

It was the day of Diwali (a festival of lights celebrated by Hindus). Every house had been illuminated and was resplendent. People were praising the splendour of the lights. A blind man asked, "Brother! How is this light?" One man said, "It is white."

The blind man asked, "What kind of white is it?"

The man said, "It is like the colour of Bakula birds."

The blind man said, "How is a Bakula?"

The man bent his hand in the form of the neck of a Bakula bird and said, "Bakula is like this."

The blind man said, "Yes, yes now I have understood how crooked the light is."

The man beat his forehead with his hand because the blind man had not understood his meaning. Finally when his blindness was cured he could see light for himself and understand its nature. When the mind becomes pure by means of self-discipline it can experience spiritual bliss.

If you take a question to a *sādhū* and if your mind is free then you will get an answer to your question.

A certain gentleman saluted the Preceptor and asked him, "I have a question to ask you, if you permit me, I will ask you that question."

The Preceptor said, "From where have you come?"

The man said, "I have come from Bombay."

The Preceptor said, "Where are you going?"

The man said, "I am going to Delhi."

The Preceptor said, "What may be the price of Basmati rice in Bombay?"

The man said, "It may be Rs. 6 per kg."

The Preceptor said, "What may be the price of a pair of shoes in Delhi?"

The man said, "The price of a pair of shoes including tax will be Rs. 176, but a pair of finer leather-shoes may cost Rs. 165. Which shoes do you prefer?"

The Preceptor said, "I do not want either rice or shoes. I merely tried to search your mind and see with what things your mind is filled. I have found that your mind is full of Bombay, Delhi, Basamati and such things. I have not been able to see any question or doubt in any corner of your mind. You can get an answer to your question only if you come to me with that question in your mind and nothing else. You will get no answer if you ask me questions about God with your mind full of the whole world. Before asking the question free your mind of all other ideas and then come to me."

The devotion for God should be spontaneous and natural. It cannot be forced on any one. A friend asked a great priest, "Can you make me a devotee of God?"

The priest said, "Why not? Look, I will jump down the roof of your house, nothing will happen to me if I utter the name of God and that will make you believe in God's power."

The friend said, "By chance, many people are not injured when they jump down a roof. Why do you drag poor God into this affair?"

The priest said, "If I escape unhurt once you may say I escaped by chance, but if I am not hurt even when I jump down a second time what would you say?"

The friend said, "Even that is by chance. You speak of jumping down from the roof of your house but many people escape unhurt even when they fall down from an aeroplane. That is a mere coincidence, or a mere matter of luck that is all."

The priest said, "If for the third time, I jump down from the roof of a high temple uttering the name of God

and if I am not hurt, will that make you believe that the power of God saved me?"

The friend said, "If you jump down three times and if you are not hurt it only shows that you have practised it. It only shows that you are skilled in the art of jumping down from roofs. Some circus proprietor pleased with your skill may employ you in his company." The Priest said, "To hell with your question. I tried to inspire in you devotion for God but you have proved yourself to be an unbeliever and you have taken me from the temple to the circus!"

He who wants to be a Preceptor must have attained perfect knowledge, otherwise he will become a laughing stock.

An Inspector of schools went to a school to inspect the teaching that was going on in the school. He entered a classroom, the teacher and the students stood up respectfully. By making a sign with his hand the inspector suggested them to sit down and then he put a question to the class, "Children! Who broke the *Shiva Dhanush* (the bow of Shiva)? Tell me." The boys began to look at each other's faces. The Inspector said, "Come on, think well, try to remember. Those who know it, may lift their hands."

When none lifted his hand, the Inspector asked, a tall boy to stand up and said to him, "You tell me." Shaking with fear the boy said, "Sir! I did not break it, this is the truth. If any one else has broken it, I do not know it. Otherwise, I would have told you his name."

The Inspector looked towards the class-teacher. The class teacher was in great fright. He was afraid that he might lose his job and said, "There are some obstinate students in this class. It is possible that some student of this class has broken the bow. I will find out who he is by tomorrow, I will let you know his name. I cannot tell you at once who he is."

The Inspector greatly disappointed went to the Head Master's room. The Head Master got up from his

chair, sat in another chair leaving his chair for the Inspector. The Inspector sat in that chair. The Inspector remarked, "The level of the school has gone down."

The Head Master said, "Yes sir, you are right. It is going down. If the government does not sanction funds the whole building may go down."

The Inspector said, "Brother! I spoke of the level of teaching, not of the building. I went to a class and asked the students a simple question but no one could answer."

The Head Master said, "Yes Sir, the question you put to the class has reached my ears also. You want to know who broke the *Shiva Dhanush* (the bow of Siva). Do you like the bow very much? Was it your own?" The Inspector said, "It is not material whether I am connected with that bow or not. I only wanted to know who broke it? The boys, of course, are boys and we cannot expect an answer from them but the teacher himself could not answer the question." The Head Master said, "It does not matter. Boys are boys. While playing, one of them might have broken it. You need not be upset over this simple matter. I will pay you Rs. 5/- out of the school fund, you can get another bow like that. After I find out the name of the student who broke the bow I will collect the amount from his parents."

The Inspector took out a five-rupee note and flung it into the face of the Head Master, bit his teeth in anger and went straight to the office of the District Educational Officer. The Educational Officer heard the entire story with great concentration and said, "I will send a circular immediately to find out how many bows have been sent to various schools, how many of them are intact and how many have been broken. I will see that new bows are sent to replace the broken ones. You need not worry about it. I will see that this is done within a month."

The Inspector's disappointment, despair and dismay knew no bounds. He went to the office of the Director

of Education. Having heard the entire story of what had happened, he said, "I have full faith in the ability of the District Educational Officer. He has said that he would get everything done in one month. I am sure that the necessary arrangements will be made within that time. You need not worry. If the arrangement is not made within that time you may remind me of that within two or three months."

The Inspector greatly dismayed went to the Minister for Education. The Minister having heard everything said, "It is not an ordinary task to make this arrangement for the whole area. Every year the things required by schools are supplied to them. Sometimes the articles thus sent are broken in transit. It is likely that the bow to which you are referring was broken in transit. You know how carelessly porters handle parcels. They throw about parcels as if they are bundles of cotton. I will write to the Minister of Railways and draw his attention to this point and I will request him to issue instructions to porters regarding the proper way to handle parcels. This will help not only the Education Department but also common people. If this is done no article will be broken in any station sent by any one as it has happened in the case of your *Shiva Dhanush*. I think the Railway Minister will certainly make this arrangement but it may take one or two years." At the end I would like to request you not to make this matter known to the newspaper people; otherwise they will give it such publicity that we lose our popularity and we may get no votes in the next election that may take place five years later."

After hearing the lecture of the Minister for Education, the Inspector of Schools returned home dejected. This is a satire on modern education. He who does not have perfect knowledge is unfit to be a teacher or a preceptor. Such teachers as are ignorant are responsible for the low esteem in which teachers are held today. The preceptor who has a profound knowledge cares for relevance and brevity in his speeches and avoids long and platitudinous discourses.

Some people requested a *Muni* (an ascetic who practices silence but who has a deep knowledge) to deliver a discourse. The *Muni* said to them, "Do you know anything about God?" The people said, "Gurudev, we know nothing." The *Muni* said, नास्ति मूलं कुतः शाखाः (How can there be branches without roots?) How can we expect branches when there are no roots at all? If there is a seed, we can make it sprout and grow. You know nothing about God. How can I grow a plant without a seed?"

The people went away, but their desire to hear his discourses was strong. The next day, they approached him and surrounding him entreated him to deliver a discourse. On being thus entreated, he said, "Do you know anything about God?" They had not forgotten their experience of the previous day. One man representing all of them said reversing the answer, "Yes sir, we know about God." The *Muni* said, "If you know about God, then what do you desire to hear from me? What can I say about a thing which you know? If I deliver a discourse now, it will be like grinding flour which has been already ground. I will be wasting your time."

The people went away disappointed. The third day they came in the morning to salute the Gurudev. They had thought of a new answer to be given to the Gurudev. Somehow they wanted to hear a discourse delivered by the Gurudev. Noting their determination to hear a discourse from him, he put the same question to them, "Do you know anything about God?"

Representing one-half of the listeners, one gentleman said, "We know nothing about God." Representing the other half, one said, "We know something about God."

The Gurudev said, "Half of you know about God and the other half do not know. So, my task is happily over. I need not deliver a discourse. Those of you who know about God may teach the others about Him. So, please do so."

Who can know the extent of the greatness of a Preceptor?

12. PRETENSION

DEAR CANDID PEOPLE!

Devotion, meditation and worship should be selfless. It is meaningless to pray for prosperity and position when once we have renounced all our worldly prosperity. Prosperity and position are the fruits of our noble actions. If you have earned merit in your *Poorvajanma* by means of noble actions, naturally, in this life you will get a high position and prosperity. If you desire to possess prosperity and a high position in your next life you must accumulate merit in this life by doing noble actions. No one prevents you from performing noble actions.

But if we think of the question of devotion for Vitarāgaprabhu, we should realize that it is not proper to pray to him asking for prosperity and position. The idea of prayer belongs to the Hindu *dharma*. According to the Jain *dharma*, we praise God and glorify Him but we do not pray to Him for anything.

By glorifying the Lord and by praising His sublime qualities, we feel inspired to acquire those virtues. This is the fruit of glorifying the Lord. But by the force of tradition people outwardly glorify the Lord but inwardly pray to Him for boons. They say outwardly:

“Oh Lord Shāntināth! Bestow peace on us.”

But inwardly they say:

“And kindly increase the price of sesame, cotton and jaggery.”

In this manner, they behave hypocritically. They cannot deceive the Lord, but by behaving thus they de-

ceive themselves. They indulge in self-deception. That is nothing but double-dealing. Candid people would not do so. It is said :

“Those who are straight-forward, walk on a straight path. Those who are crooked, walk on a crooked path. The arrow goes straight but the wheel goes rolling and swerving from the path.”

The noble people are distinguished from the ignoble by the fact that in their case there is unity between thought and word, and between word and deed.

मनस्येकम् वचस्येकम् कर्मण्येकम् महात्मनाम् ।
मनस्यन्यद्वचस्थन्यत् कर्मण्यन्यद् दुरात्मनाम् ॥

*Manasyekam Vachasyekam,
Karmapyekam Mahātmanām
Manasyanyadvachasyanyat
Karmanyanyad durātmanām.*

“There will be unity or oneness in thought, word and deed in the case of great men (*Mahātmās*), but in the case of wicked men (*Durāthmās*), there will be a divorce between thought and word, and between word and deed.”

Great men speak out what they think and act in accordance with their word. They say whatever they think and they do whatever they say. The nature of wicked people is completely opposite to this. Their thought is different from their word and their word is different from their actions.

A Philosopher says that pomp and show are like a false dress. The meaning of this is that there is untruth at the roots of pomp and show. A man who is hypocritical is not truthful. We cannot believe him. If a Bakula bird and a crow are seated before you, which would you consider better? A poet says this while expressing his opinion on this point.

“The Bakula bird is a hypocrite because its body is white but its mind is black. The crow is better of these two because it is the same inside as well as outside.”

A thief is a despicable person but one who cheats others is several times more despicable than a thief. By means of deception and fraud a man may achieve some profit once but fraud does not bring profit every time. Dry fire-wood cannot be put into an oven a second time because it burns away at the very first instance.

What is there at the root of friendship? Faithfulness. Fraud destroys faith.

माया मित्ताणि नासेइ ॥

—दशवैकालिक

Māyā mittāni nāseyi

—*Dashavaikalika*

“Deception destroys friendship.”

This statement is always true. On account of hypocrisy we have to face many difficulties; and so we are advised to discard it.

व्यसन शत सहायां दूरतो मुञ्च मायाम् ॥

Vyasana shata sahāyām durato muncha māyām

We should discard deception and hypocrisy which help hundreds of agonies to arise.

Deception practised to acquire wealth is not so dangerous as the deception practised for the sake of *dharma* or religion. The lady Tirthankar Mallinātha, in her previous life as Mahābhala performed *tapas*. But she concealed it from her friends and uttered a lie about it saying that on that day she was not taking food because she was suffering from a stomach-ache. While actually she was fasting. On account of this deception, she had to experience the evil consequence of being born as a woman. Hence it has been said :

A little fraud practised even in the matter of *dharma* or religion can bring about evil consequences. It is said in the *Tatvārtha Sūtra*:

माया तैर्यग्योनस्य ॥

Māyā thairyagyonasya

“Deception makes man face the evil consequence of being born as an animal or a bird

Any man who does not like to be born as an animal or a bird or a woman in the next *janma* (life) should keep away from deception. “Deception is an impediment on the path that leads to spiritual prosperity.”

Deception is fraud. We must conquer it by means of candour. “We should conquer hypocrisy by means of gentleness.”

Deception destroys faith and so a man loses his friends and in consequence he has to experience his difficulties alone without any one to sympathize with him. Moreover, on account of deception man has to be born in his next life as a woman, an animal or as a bird and suffer untold miseries. So, deception brings sorrow in this life and in the next life. Shubha Chandrachārya says :

“We should expel deception from this world because it brings harm in this life and also in the next life.”

We should never practise deception in our dealings with any one, especially in our dealings with preceptors etc. who have been mentioned by moral teachers, because deception in our dealings with them can bring great harm.

आचार्ये च नटे धूर्ते
वैद्य वेद्यया बहुश्रुते ।
कौटिल्यं नैव कर्तव्यं
कौटिल्यं तैर्विनिमित्तम् ॥

Āchārye cha naṭe dhurte
Vaidya-Veshyā-bahusrute
Kautilyam naiva kartavyam
Kautilyam tairvinirmitam

“We should not practise deception or hypocrisy in our dealings with preceptors, actors, officious people, doc-

tors, prostitutes and great scholars because they are the makers of simulation.”

Deception will not have any effect on these people and if any one tries to deceive them he will deceive himself and the tables will be turned against him. For example, if you deceive a doctor that is if you conceal from him your disease you will not be able to regain your health; your disease grows worse and may cause other diseases too. Therefore, while a doctor is questioning you about your health, you should give him truthful answers; you should not conceal any relevant fact from him and you should not also give him wrong information.

The students who deceive their teacher will not be successful in their learning. They will not be able to get perfect knowledge and they will be wasting their precious time. The knowledge that is gathered during one's student-career will be helpful to him throughout his life. If a student neglects the duty of gathering knowledge as a student, later, he will never be able to attain perfection because, later, he will have to shoulder the responsibility of earning money and supporting his family. Therefore a student must acquire knowledge with concentration when he is a student and when he is free from cares and worries and when he has the opportunity of acquiring knowledge.

Now-a-days, the tendency on the part of students to copy answers in the examination halls has been on the increase. We read about these things in newspapers. It does not matter if one or two *Dādās* (rowdies) take recourse to this evil practice. But in some examination centres mass-copying has become a regular phenomenon. Copying answers in the examination is an act of deception and fraud; and its evil consequences are evident. The students who pass by means of copying become pitiable when they occupy some positions. They have to face disgrace at every step. Because they are inefficient and because in the government departments, their services cannot

be easily dispensed with, they are transferred to distant places every now and then. This happens because no officer likes to have such inefficient people under him. Therefore, they are passed from place to place like a foot-ball. They have to spend their whole life in despair and distress.

If you deceive your lawyer, that is, if you do not reveal to him all the facts of your case, surely, at the end he will lose your case. You will not only lose the fee paid to the lawyer but also you will have to pay your opponent all his expenses. Moreover, you will be penalised, and that is another matter.

It has been rightly said, "The quality of deception is not inborn in any one. If you have not practised deception, practise it and see the result. If you do not want to taste the bitterness of repentance, take example from those who have suffered from practising deception."

If any one reveals to you the secrets of another man, he deceives that man and he is betraying the trust that has been reposed in him by that man. Be careful while dealing with such a person. Never reveal to him your secrets because if his selfish objectives are not achieved, he will be angry with you and just as he revealed another man's secrets to you, he will reveal your secrets to other men. He will reveal your secrets to your enemies and will cause great loss and damage to you.

If you practise deception or simulation to help others it is not objectionable or improper.

Emperor Akbar in a fit of anger, dismissed a servant-maid. Her name was Daulat. Weeping over her misfortune, she approached Birbal who was an intelligent minister. Birbal suggested to her a plan to get back her position. She went away happily and was waiting for an opportunity. The *Idd* festival came. On that day, she went and began knocking on the door of the chamber in which Akbar happened to be sitting. The emperor asked from inside, "Who is it?" She replied, "I am Daulat

(prosperity and power). If you permit me I will come in or I will go away." How could the Emperor send away good fortune on the day of *Idd*. He said, "If indeed you are **Fortune**, please come in." When she went in the Emperor pitied her and re-employed her. When he made enquiries, he came to know that this plan had been suggested to her by Birbal.

There is an epigrammatic statement in Sanskrit which means,

त्रिभिर्वर्षे^० स्त्रिभिर्मासै-

स्त्रिभिः पक्षैस्त्रिभिर्दिनेः

अत्युग्रपुण्यपापाना-

मिहैव लभ्यते फलम्

Tribhirvarshaistribhirmasaih

stribhiḥ pakshaiḥ stribhirdinaiḥ

Atyugrapunyapāpānā

Mihaiva labhyate phalam

"For all your actions which are extremely good or extremely bad you will taste the fruits in this world within three years or three months or three fortnights or three days."

Here is an example which illustrates the truth of the *subhāshita*.

In the city of Murshidabad, there was a merchant who dealt in vessels or metal ware. One day at about 8 a.m. a jeep halted before his shop. The jeep bore the label, **The VIP Supply Department of the Government**. An officer wearing a suit and boots got off the jeep. Along with him, a servant also got off the jeep. The merchant was greatly delighted to see the officer and the jeep. The officer gave the merchant an order for fifty thousand rupees worth vessels and took from the merchant five thousand rupees as commission. The officer took the articles, got them packed and put them in his jeep and gave the merchant a cheque for fifty thousand rupees. The merchant getting a little suspicious asked him for cash

payment. The officer said, "Look, it is only half-past nine, the bank will open at 10.30 a.m. I will get cash from the bank and I will pay you personally by eleven o'clock. Until then my servant will be sitting here. I have to go because I have some urgent work in the office. You need not at all worry about the money."

Saying this, the officer went away from there. The merchant waved his hand to suggest to the servant to sit down and he sat down. The merchant began to wait for the officer. The clock struck eleven. It struck twelve. Every now and then the merchant looked at the road but the officer did not turn up. The merchant did not even go home to take his lunch. He thought, "If I am not in the shop when the officer comes how can he give me the money? He will not wait for me. If he goes back with the money where can I search for him? Therefore, it is not good to go away from the shop. Today, I shall take food only once, that is, in the evening. It does not matter." The merchant kept waiting for the officer. The clock struck three. Now, the merchant remembered that the bank would have closed at 2-30 p.m. He thought with fear, "The officer has not yet come. Will he ever come?"

The servant was sitting there. The merchant asked him, "Where is your officer? Where does your officer live? What is the phone number of his bungalow?" The servant said, "Dear sir, I know nothing about him."

The merchant said, "Why do you say so? Are you not his servant?"

The servant said, "Dear sir, I was searching for a job. The officer who came here by the jeep told me to sit in the jeep if I wanted a job. He gave me a uniform and asked me to wear it and said that I was his servant from today. I wore the uniform. He left me here and went away. That is all I know. Just as you are waiting for him, I too am waiting for him."

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The merchant held his head and cried aloud, "I have lost fifty thousand rupees."

The servant shouted, "Alas, I have lost my job." This is not an imaginary incident. It actually occurred once.

By giving a discount of five thousand rupees, the merchant desired to make a huge profit of thousands of rupees. But he lost thousands of rupees. On that day itself, deception brought its consequences.

Once, there was an architect. He was getting a monthly salary from the king. The houses of the rich people of the city were built according to his plans. Of the income, he was getting from selling his plans, one quarter had to be remitted to the king's treasury and he was getting three-fourths of the income. Even if he did not sell his plans, he would be getting his salary. Therefore, he could easily support his family. The king was paying him monthly salary because, he did not like such a great artist to wander about in search of work and livelihood. He assisted even in the construction of the king's palace. In course of time, the artist became old. His hands and legs began to shake on account of nervous weakness. The King once called him and said, "Esteemed artist, you have rendered a lot of service to our city and to us. Now, we have decided to give you a pension. Kindly carry out one more work. Kindly construct a beautiful bungalow on the other bank of the river that flows by our city. After that is done, we will not give you any more jobs. You can take rest at home receiving half your salary as your pension from our treasury as long as you are alive. Please, prepare an estimate for that building. What amount do you require to construct the bungalow? You can tell us without any hesitation." The architect at once made a calculation and said, "Your Highness, I require fifty thousand rupees to construct the bungalow. Kindly arrange to pay me an advance of twenty-five thousand rupees and I shall start the construction tomorrow. Within a month, I will get the building completed."

The king had great confidence in the architect. He at once paid him the entire amount of fifty thousand rupees. The architect spent a whole day buying the necessary materials for the building. The very next day under his supervision, workers began building the bungalow. But, he thought, "After this work, I will not get any other contract from the king or from the people. Seeing my old age, nobody would like to engage me and the pension I may get will be half the salary; therefore, why should I not save a lot of money by using low-class materials?" In this manner, his mind began to entertain thoughts of deception and fraud.

Using cheap materials, he built the bungalow within the fixed time, but he made the bungalow attractive by painting it colourfully. He went to the king and informed him that the building was ready and that he might go and inspect it. The king said, laughing, "Why should I inspect your work? When the building is built under your supervision, it ought to be excellent."

The next day, the citizens of the city arranged a function to felicitate the architect. In the midst of all, who had gathered, the king announced that he was making a present of the building to the architect. The king said, "Our great architect is now old and he needs rest and peace. I want him to live in this bungalow with his family and we will pay him a monthly pension of half his salary as long as he is alive." The citizens approved of the king's announcement and expressed their hearty delight by clapping their hands but, in spite of getting such a costly present, the architect showed no signs of cheerfulness in his face. Why? He was gloomy because he knew that the bungalow was weak. He had used cheap materials to build it and within a couple of years it would collapse.

To please the people, he began to live in that house, but inwardly, he experienced so much repentance and agony that he became weak and thin. His deception itself deceived him. On account of mental worry, he died within a few months. Within a couple of years, the build-

ing fell to the ground. The members of his family became homeless. The proverb, "reap what you have sown" came true in his life. He had to taste the fruits of his own deception.

A certain advocate advised a person who had committed a murder to say *Ba* by way of answering any question put to him in the court by any one. The lawyer said that, he would manage the case in such a way that he would be acquitted of the charge of murder. He demanded five thousand rupees as fee and took an advance of five hundred rupees.

When the judge put questions to the accused, he kept saying, *Ba*.

The judge said, "What is this? Have you become mad?"

The murderer said, "*Ba*."

The judge thinking that he was a mad fellow acquitted him. The murderer went home and thought, "*Ba* has saved me from being hanged. It can save the lawyer's fee also." That night the lawyer went to him and asked him to pay him the remaining amount of four thousand five hundred rupees as they had agreed upon. In reply to this the murderer merely said, "*Ba*." The lawyer said, "I say. This is not the court; speak properly." Again the murderer cried gleefully, "*Ba*." The lawyer turned pale. He had to taste the bitter fruit of his own deception. Hence, deception should be discarded.

13. SELF-SACRIFICE

OH, YOU LOVERS OF RENUNCIATION!

Momentary sensual delights are very fascinating but **have** you ever thought that even the happiness arising from worldly delights also depends on sacrifice? Every morning, you get up and go to make some **renunciation**. If there is no difficulty about it, you can enjoy your food; otherwise before thinking of taking your food you will run to your doctor and say, "Doctor, I am suffering from constipation and indigestion."

Thus, even for a momentary relief and joy, renunciation or sacrifice is necessary. So, there is no wonder if it is said that renunciation or self-sacrifice is necessary to attain permanent felicity.

त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥

—गीता

Tyāgāchchāntiran antaram.

—*Gītā*

"Self-sacrifice brings immediate peace."

Today, the **educated** people are carrying on serious discussions about the need for world-peace but they do not try to discard the disturbance that dwells within themselves. If four people who do not know swimming are drowning in the sea, they may try to save themselves by holding on to each other. The result will be that all of them will be drowned. This will be the condition of those who seek world-peace without enshrining peace in their hearts.

One great attribute of our Lord is *vitarāga* (one who has conquered all passions). Where there is passion or desire there is sorrow and where there is renunciation, there is felicity.

नास्ति रागसमम् दुःखम्

नास्ति त्याग समम् सुखम् ॥

Nasti rāgasamaṁ duḥkhaṁ,

Nasti tyāgasamaṁ sukhaṁ

“There is no sorrow like passion and no felicity like renunciation.”

Look at a playfield where football is being played. If any player sits down holding the ball without playing nobody will get the joy of the game. Wealth also should be passed from person to person like a football. The player who gets the ball passes it to another. The other players run behind the ball. You too run after wealth but you should not forget the objective of a player. His objective is to pass the ball on to another. Why does the cloud collect water? Its only objective is to pour it down in the form of rain. The wealth that is collected to be given away to others is not hoarded wealth. If you go riding on a bicycle to travel all over the world, it may take some years. But those who fly by a supersonic plane travel all over the world within few days. The difference between renunciation made by a *shrāvak* (a pious jain) and a *sādhu* is similar. The *sādhu* makes a wholesale sacrifice; but the *shrāvak* sacrifices in retail. Self-sacrifice is the most important of all virtues. Its weight is greater than that of all the other virtues. A moral teacher says :

त्याग एको गुणः शलाघ्यः किमन्यैर्गुणराशिभिः ।

त्यागाज्जगति पूज्यन्ते पशु-पाषाण-पादपाः ॥

Tyāg Eko Guṇaḥ Shlāgyaḥ

Kimanyaiḥ guṇarashibih

Tyāgājjagati Pūjyante

Paśu, Pāṣāṇa, Pādapaḥ.

“Self-sacrifice is the only virtue that deserves praise. What is the use of possessing the other virtues? In this world, on account of self-sacrifice (made by them) even animals, stones (statutes) and trees are worshipped. (When that is so what about man?)”

A poet has said this while inspiring people to seek the joy of self-sacrifice.

“If you want real peace and felicity eat the fruit of self-sacrifice. What is there in these worldly delights? They are like false mangoes and false almonds.”

In the following stanzas, taken from the *Bhagavad Gitā*, we get an account of the differences among the sacrifices prompted by the three *gunas* (qualities), namely *Tāmasa* (तामस), *Rajasa* (राजस) and *Sātvika* (सात्त्विक)

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः
 कर्मणां नोपपद्यते ।
 मोहात्तस्य परित्यागः
 तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥
 दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म
 कायक्लेशभयात् त्यजेत् ।
 स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागम्
 नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥
 कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म
 नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन !
 सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलञ्चैव
 स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः ॥

Niyatasya tu sanyāsaḥ
Karmano nopapadyate
Mohāttasya Parityāgaḥ
Tāmasaḥ Parikirtitaḥ
Dukha mityeva Yatkarma
Kāya Kleshabhayāt tyajet
Sa kritvārajasam tyāgam
Naivatyāgaphalam labhet
Kāryamityeva Yatkarma
Niyatam Kriyaterjuna
Sangam tyaktva phalanchaiva
Sa tyagaḥ Sātvikomataḥ.

“It is not proper to renounce a duty that is assigned to you. If by means of delusion it is renounced it is called *tāmasa*. The name *Rajasah* is given to the relinquishment of a duty out of the fear that it may cause bodily trouble or unhappiness. The fruit of such a renunciation cannot be enjoyed by the man who makes it. The name *sātvika* is given to the renunciation of the fruits of one’s duty. This is called *karmasanyāsa*.”

The renunciation of the fruit of our *karma* or action is selflessness. This kind of renunciation is essential for the attainment of the purity of mind.

It is said, “Until a *sādhu* attains the level of making a sacrifice without expecting any return from it, he cannot attain purity of mind. How can he destroy his *karmas* until he attains purity of mind that is until he frees his mind from all passions?” The implication is that self-sacrifice has a direct connection with the destruction of *karmas* (good and evil actions). Hence it is said :

त्याग एव हि सर्वेषाम्

मुक्ति साधनमुत्तमम् ॥

Tyāga eva hi sarveshām

Mukti sādhanamuttamam.

“Self-sacrifice is the most efficacious means to attain salvation.”

There are two kinds of self-sacrifice on the basis of what is to be sacrificed. They are: (1) **External** and (2) **Internal**. The name external sacrifice is given to the sacrifice of wealth, family, house, lands etc. and internal sacrifice is the name given to the relinquishment of passions and desires. Both the kinds of sacrifice are great. External sacrifice is made first and then internal sacrifice should be made. The aim of external sacrifice is to make internal sacrifice. If at the end internal sacrifice is not made, all external sacrifices are futile.

“The external sacrifice made by people are futile and fruitless if they retain in their minds passions and desires.”

A disciple asked a teacher, "I make sacrifices, yet I have not attained peace of mind. Why?" The teacher replied, "Think well and see if there is hidden in some corner of your mind, a desire for the fruit of your action or sacrifice. A man who makes a sacrifice desiring some result from it; or who makes a sacrifice fearing hell or who makes a sacrifice on account of anger is not a true benefactor. His sacrifice is not true and genuine. In the same manner, sacrificing things we do not possess is not a sacrifice at all. If a poor man says, "I will not eat delicious food using a gold plate." It is not a sacrifice because he does not possess a gold plate nor does he have the means to eat delicious food. Everyone can make such sacrifices.

अप्राप्तैर्दर्थे भवति सर्वोऽपि त्यागी ॥

—नीतिवाक्यामृतम्

Aprāpterthe bhavati sarvopi tyāgi

—*Neetivākyaṃrutam*

(All can sacrifice a thing which they do not possess.)

Therefore, Lord Mahāvira has said, "A man who does not enjoy garments, scent, decorations, woman and bedstead because he does not possess them cannot be said to have renounced them. He who turns away from or renounces the pleasures which he can afford makes a real sacrifice."

A man wanted to catch his own shadow. Therefore, he went chasing his shadow but he could not hold it. Tired of running he began panting for breath. Just then, a certain traveller, who wanted to free him from his obsession suggested that if he turned his back towards his shadow and ran away from it, it would come running behind him. He did so. He began to run facing the sun, and his shadow began to follow him. The same can be said about material possessions.

If it is a raw fruit, we have to pluck it from the tree; but if it is a ripe fruit, the tree itself sacrifices it and such a fruit is sweet to taste. The renunciation of

worldly life will naturally take place if we attain maturity in thinking, firmness of mind and purity of heart. By such a renunciation, the person who makes it gets real felicity or bliss.

A certain ascetic had with him a *pārasmani* (a philosopher's stone). It was believed traditionally that if it was brought into contact with iron, the touch would transmute that piece of iron into gold. A poor man served the ascetic for some months with a genuine devotion. Greatly pleased by his devotion and service, the ascetic told him to ask for something in return for his service. He asked for the *pārasmani* and the ascetic gave it to him at once.

The poor man felt very happy and returned home with the *pārasmani*. After telling the members of his family about the wonderful and miraculous *pārasmani* he put it in a large iron vessel. The stone was in the vessel a whole day but the vessel did not turn into gold. The members of his family began making fun of him. He himself felt greatly sad and disappointed since the *pārasmani* did not transmute the iron vessel into a gold one. He thought that the service he had rendered to the ascetic for so many months had been a waste, and that the ascetic had given him some ordinary stone concealing from him the *pārasmani*.

The very next day he went to the place where the ascetic was in a state of spiritual trance. After waking up from his trance, the ascetic noticing tears in the eyes of his devotee asked him, "Tell me brother, why you are sad. Could you not get rid of your poverty even with the help of the *pārasmani*? Did any one steal that stone from you?"

The poor man replied, "Revered Sir! The *pārasmani* which you gave me proved itself to be an ordinary stone. How can an ordinary stone change iron into gold?"

The ascetic said, "No brother, you are wrong. What I gave you was the *pārasmani*. There must be some lapse in your handling of it."

“What defect can be there in my handling of it? The *pārasmani*, if it is a genuine one must turn iron into gold at a mere contact; but even though I kept it in an iron vessel for a whole day, the iron did not change into gold. You may kindly come to my house and see it with your own eyes.”

The ascetic went to his devotee’s house and saw it. The vessel was an old one. It was completely covered with a thick coat of dust. There were many spiders’ webs in it. The *pārasmani* was lying resplendent among the spiders’ webs. How could it produce any effect? It had not touched the iron vessel at all. The ascetic got the vessel cleaned and then he demonstrated the effect of the *pārasmani* on it.

The discourses delivered by preceptors also act in the same manner because even discourses cannot influence your minds and hearts until they are fully cleansed of their impurities. If the discourses should produce any effect on your minds and souls you should cleanse them of the spiders’ webs of passions and the dust of selfishness and other vices.

If you adore Jain ascetics and if you seek good company what will they tell you? They, having renounced life, inspire and exhort you to make self-sacrifice. They begin with advising you to renounce external objects since that is the beginning for making a total renunciation.

A preceptor made a *shrāvak* (a pious Jain) give up eating ash gourds. Returning home, the *shrāvak* informed his wife that on account of the advice of a *sādhuji* (ascetic) he had given up eating ash gourds and told her to buy some other vegetable and to cook it. She thought, “Those who are caught in the snares of the ascetics first give up ash-gourds and finally they give up their family also. Hence, this tendency to renounce things must be nipped in the bud.” Getting furious, she said, “I will cook only ash-gourds. Such things as giving up vegetables cannot be done in my house. If you like, you eat the food I prepare or you may . . .”

This offended the husband's sense of self-importance. He too angrily began scolding her. The wife did not lag behind. She took a burning piece of firewood from the oven with her hand and shook it in a terrifying manner. The husband greatly terrified by her gestures ran away into a forest. The wife also followed him. The husband dug a pit in the sand on the bank of a river and hid himself in it. Since she could not find her husband anywhere the wife returned home.

The husband, lulled by the gentle wind that was blowing, slept there. Moreover, he was greatly tired of running a long distance; hence he slept soundly. After midnight, four thieves came there. Sitting on the river bank, they divided among themselves the money they had stolen. Each put his share into a bag and tied it.

The man who was sleeping there began dreaming. In his dream, he saw his wife standing in a terrifying posture and filled with mortal dread, he cried aloud, "I will eat! I will eat! Wait a little." His idea was, "Throw away that burning firewood. I will eat the preparation made of ash-gourds. Please do not strike me with that burning stick. Wait!" But the thieves thinking that it was a ghost that was crying thus ran away terrified leaving their money-bags there. The man woke up from his sleep hearing the noises made by the thieves. Taking up the four bags of money, he returned home. He said to his wife, "Take this money. This is the fruit of my sacrifice."

Seeing the money, the wife felt greatly happy. She prepared excellent food including delicious sweets, served it to him with overflowing joy and affection. The husband began eating. The wife sitting by his side fanning him said :

ऐसा सोगन जरूर करना

धन की गाँठें घर में धरना ।

त्याग करूँगी मैं भी नाथ !

चला करूँगी तुमरे साथ ॥

*Aaisā Sogan jarur karnā
 Dhanki gante ghar me dharnā
 Tyāg karungi mai be nāth
 Chatā karungi tumre sāth.*

“We should certainly make such a sacrifice (as brings a benefit). We should bring home such bags of money. My Lord! I too will make a sacrifice. I will follow you in this habit of making such sacrifices.” Self-sacrifice is necessary for the attainment of spiritual bliss; not to attain worldly delights. How could that ignorant wife know this great truth?

A man should endeavour alone to attain spiritual felicity. It cannot be attained by people in a group because if many people gather together there will be confusion and disturbance.

Namiraj was the king of Mithila. Disease, old age and death follow every individual. Namiraj was no exception to this law of nature. Once, a terrible fever began to shake him to the depths of his being.

The doctors suggested that sandal-paste should be smeared to his body. His thousand wives who desired to attain merit (*punya*) by serving their husband began making sandal paste. The clinking noise of eight thousand bangles worn on the two thousand hands of the queens filled the palace. It increased the king's headache and his mental agitation.

When the chief minister came to know of the cause for the king's mental agitation, he conveyed a suggestion to the queens. The suggestion was carried out at once. When the noise stopped the king wondered if the queens had stopped making the sandal-paste. He also made enquiries with the minister. The minister explained to him. “Oh king! They are making the sandal-paste. There is no noise because the queens have taken out their bangles from their hands leaving one on each wrist.”

This made the king contemplative. He realized that peace could be attained in solitude not in company. He realized that it was very hard to attain peace living

among the members of one's family. Soon after his fever was cured, he decided to give up his connections with his family and to seek spiritual solace in solitude. To attain his objective he renounced his family, his palace, his wealth and all his possessions and became a *sādhu* (an ascetic).

संजमेण तवसा अप्पणं भावेमाणे विहरइ

Sanjameṇa tavasā appāṇam bhāvemāṇe viharayi.

“He began wandering about endeavouring to purify his soul by means of self-discipline and spiritual austerities.”

The sacrifice made for the sake of the welfare of others makes the benefactor immortal and famous in this world.

Once there was a farmer. In his house there was a large bag filled with wheat; yet he died of starvation. People thought that he was a miser; and that he was a fool to die of starvation, inspite of having a large bag of wheat. But generally what people think will not be true always.

It was discovered that the farmer who had died of starvation inspite of having a bag of wheat was indeed a great benefactor. When this truth was known the king's servants came to take the bag of wheat. Beneath the bag of wheat, they found a letter written in the farmer's hand. He had written in the letter thus: “This is a time of adversity for farmers. If I eat the wheat I have, our brother-farmers will have no seeds for bringing up the next crop. I am starving because I want every farmer to get enough seeds for growing the next crop. Being unable to bear with my hunger, I am dying. I want this wheat to be distributed among all the farmers equally according to their necessity. This is my last wish! May all live in happiness!”

On hearing the contents of the letter all began to praise the farmer's generosity heartily. This is what an English Philosopher says, “To hold the hands in prayer is good. But to open them in charity is better.”

We should use discretion in giving charity. We do not get the fruit of charity by thoughtlessly extending help to all sorts of people.

A certain *sādhū* came to the house of a *shrāvika* for *gochari* (food). He was a man of great spiritual attainments. When the ascetic went out after obtaining *bhikshā* (food) from her, people began to praise her greatly.

There lived a prostitute in the neighbourhood. She too desired to be praised thus by people. She requested some *sūdhus* (ascetics) to come to her house for food but no one was willing to honour her invitation because they would not accept food from a prostitute. Finally, she brought a *bhānd* (a beggar). He came in the guise of an ascetic. The prostitute gave him excellent food with respect and kindness. The beggar sat on the road and began eating the food. The people found out that he was an impersonator. Angered by his ascetic's disguise they began to pelt stones at him.

Imitating others in doing charity brings such difficulties. If after the discourse, I ask you, "How is life?" You will answer, "It is very bad. It is bitter." Then I will say, "If it is so, there is *vihār* tomorrow. Tomorrow, I am going on my spiritual wanderings. Come with me." Think how many would be ready to renounce life and to come with me.

14. GIVING CHARITY

OH, YOU MAGNANIMOUS PEOPLE!

Yesterday, we thought about self-sacrifice. Even while giving some help to others, we have to make some self-sacrifice. But one can make self-sacrifice without giving away anything. A *sādhu* is an *anagar*. He renounces his home; but he does not give away his house to anyone. Self-sacrifice implies discarding attachments but when we make a gift, it has to be received by someone.

अनुग्रहार्थं स्वस्यातिसर्गो दानम् ॥

विधि-द्रव्य-दातृ-पात्रविशेषात्तद्विशेषः ॥

—तत्त्वार्थ सूत्र ७/३३-३४

Anugrahārtham Swasyātisargo dānam

Vidhi dravya dātru Pātravisheshāttadvisheshah

—*Tatvārtha Sūtra*, 7/33-34

“A gift is given when it is received by someone. The quality of a gift made depends on **propriety, the thing given**, the giver of the gift and the fitness of the person to whom it is given.” This *sūtra* makes it clear that in giving away anything discretion is more important than self-sacrifice. **The propriety** (*vidhi*) in respect of a gift is to think of the place, and time for making the gift and the principles of the recipient. *Dravyavichāra* (the *consideration of the article to be given away*) is to consider the quality of the article that we are giving away and its usefulness to the recipient.

Datrvichāra (consideration of the giver of the gift) is to consider the extent of the giver’s faith and his attitude towards the recipient. This implies that the giver should have no contempt or indifference or jealousy for

the recipient. Moreover he should not regret having given the gift and should not feel unhappy about it. A consideration of these things is *Dravyavichāra*. *Pātravichāra* is a consideration of the fitness of the recipient to receive the gift. In other words, the giver should see whether the recipient deserves the gift or not. That is whether he will make a proper use of the gift or not.

Kindness or the act of giving a gift is the root of all virtues in man. Kindness or benevolence has been described as being the mother of *dharma* or the religious temperament.

धम्मस जणणी दया ॥

Dammasa Janāni dayā.

Daya or kindness is the mother of *Dharma* or rightousness

What is that *dharma*? It is kindness or giving help to others. *Dāna* or gift is the concrete and constructive manifestation of kindness. A man cannot give away a gift in the real sense of the word, until and unless he has compassion and commiseration for the needy. The following stanza describes the rarity of the quality of charity:

शतेषु जायते शूरः .

सहस्रेषु च पण्डितः ।

वक्ता दशसहस्रेषु

दाता भवति वा न वा ॥

Shateshu jāyathe shurah;

Sahasreshu cha paṇḍitah

Vaktā daśasahasreshu

dātā bhavati va na va

One out of a hundred becomes a hero, one out of a thousand becomes a scholar; one out of ten thousand becomes an orator but a benevolent man may appear or may not at all appear. In other words, a benevolent man rarely appears.

G.S.-10

If a man is invited to a dinner his face grows cheerful. But if he has to give away anything, his face grows depressed like that of a person who has drunk castor oil. If a person is asked to give some charity or help, he pleads many pretexts to show his inability to render help. But, the same person is ready to spend ten thousand rupees if necessary to extricate himself from a tight corner. It should be remembered that a gift given by force brings no good result. Even if it is a gift given secretly, if it is given with compassion and without any ulterior motive it brings great merit and between those two types of gifts there is a world of difference. One gift is given to cover up one's selfish or wicked actions and the other is given for the attainment of merit. The giver of the gift experiences elevation and humbleness when he gives it happily and willingly. The following stanza describes the elation that the giver of a gift experiences when he gives it with a genuine feeling of kindness.

गौरवं प्राप्यते दाना-

न्न तु वित्तस्य सञ्चयात् ।

स्थितिरुच्चैः पयोदानाम्

पयोधीनामधःस्थितिः ॥

—सक्तिमुक्तावलिः

Gauravaṁ Prāpyate dānā -

· Nna tu Vitasya sanchayāt

Sthitiruchchāiḥ Payodānām

Payodhināmadhaḥsthitih

—*Suktimukthavali*

We attain respect and elevation by giving a gift; not by hoarding wealth. That is why the cloud occupies an elevated position in the sky, while the sea which hoards water occupies a low position.

Money should be given away to the needy or should be enjoyed; otherwise it will be lost. These three ways, namely **charity**, **enjoyment** and **loss**, are the ones by which money moves. It is said:

दातव्यं भोक्तव्यम्

सति विभवे सञ्चयो न कर्त्तव्यः ।

पश्येह मधुकरीणाम्

सञ्चितमर्थं हरन्त्यन्ये ॥

—शाङ्गधरपद्धतिः

Dātavyam bhoktavyam

Sati vibhave sanchayo na kartavyah

Pasyeh madukariṇām

Sanchitamartham harntyanye

—*Sharnghadharaapddhatih*

If you have wealth, it should be given away in charity or it should be enjoyed by yourself, but you should not hoard it. See how the honey collected by bees is taken away by others.

To keep away birds from his field, a farmer makes out of dry grass and sticks a form resembling a human being and that scare-crow kept in the field does not eat the grain nor does it allow others to eat the grain. A man who does not enjoy his wealth or does not give it away in charity is like that scare-crow. It has been said:

यो न ददाति न भुङ्क्ते

सति विभवे नैव तस्य तद् द्रव्यम् ।

तृणमयकृत्रिमपुरूषो

रक्षति सस्यं परस्वार्थे ॥

Yona dadāti na bhunkte

Sati vibhave naiva tasya tad dravyam

Trinamayakritrimapurūsho

Rakshati Sasyaṁ Parasyārthe

“If a man does not enjoy or give away his wealth then his wealth is not his though he is in possession of it. (He is not the real owner of that wealth.) Such a man (a miser) is like a human form made out of hay. He acts merely as a custodian safeguarding, the wealth that belongs to others”.

The souls of people who give away their wealth in charity, grow resplendent. This idea is effectively expressed in the following example in which clouds are used for a comparison.

“The clouds grow dark by receiving water from the seas gradually. But soon after the water falls down in the form of rain, the clouds grow white and bright. See the difference between the one who gives away and one who does not.”

The duty of a *grihastha* (a house-holder) is to give charity. If a man who does not give charity is called a *grihastha* (a house-holder) then even birds should be called *grihasthas* because they too have houses (nests).

A noble person is he who gives the needy person what he needs by guessing his need even before he asks for it.

Somehow, the desires of the suppliants should be known and what they need should be given to them even before they ask for it. We should decry those who even after knowing the needs of the suppliants make them beg for them.

The best benefactor is he who gives what the suppliants desire even before they ask for it.

“He who renders help without being asked for it belongs to the highest class of ethical excellence. He who renders help after being asked belongs to the middle level and he who does not render help even after being asked for it belongs to the lowest moral level (In other words, he is the lowest of the low morally.)”

Abdur Rahiman Khan, under the pen-name ‘Rahiman’ has composed many couplets in Hindi of which the following is one:

रहिमन ! वे नर मर चुके
 जे कहूँ माँगत जाहि ।
 उन ते पहिले ते मुएँ
 जिन मुख निकसत नाहि ॥

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*Rahiman! Ve nar mar chuke
 Je kahum māngatha jāhi
 Un te pahile te muye
 Jin mukh nikasath nāhi.*

“Those who beg for anything are as good as being dead, i.e. they do not have any self-respect. But those who say “No” are dead even before the suppliants (die). That is they are worse than the suppliants.” The man who does not enjoy or give away his wealth in charity is not the owner of the wealth, but only a custodian safeguarding it. It has been said in the *Hithopadesha* :

यद्दासि विशिष्टेभ्यो
 यच्चाश्नासि दिने दिने ।
 तत्ते वित्तमहं मन्ये
 शेषमन्यस्य रक्षसि ॥

—हितोपदेशः

*Yaddadāsi vishishṭebhyo
 yachchāsnāsi dine dine
 Tate vittamaham manye
 sheshamanyasya rakshasi.*

—*Hithopadeshah*

“I consider that wealth as yours if you enjoy it and give it away in charity to deserving people. The wealth that is not used by you is not yours, but somebody else’s and you are only a care-taker of it.”

Sir Hukmichand was known as the ‘Cotton King of Indore’. He possessed crores of rupees of wealth. Once he fell ill. He lay in his bed taking rest in his bungalow. A friend came to visit him. He naturally asked the multi-millionaire, “You have such a lot of wealth. I think you have to prepare a will for your wealth.”

The Saithji said, “What wealth is it? I have with me only seventeen lakh rupees, but regarding this wealth, I cannot write a will and so the question of preparing a will does not arise.” The friend said, “Though you are a multi-millionaire, why do you say that you have only seventeen

lakhs with you? I think you are under illusion.” The Saithji said, “Brother, I am not under illusion. I am perfectly all right. I have given away only seventeen lakh rupees by way of charity. Only that amount belongs to me. The remaining part of the wealth which you see is not mine. It belongs to my children and my grand-children who will enjoy it. The merit that I have earned by rendering this charity will accompany me to the other world. The rest will go away from me. Only that wealth, which I have given away in charity belongs to me but, no will can be prepared in respect of this wealth. I am helpless.”

Karna is famous as *dānavira* (one who is greatly magnanimous). No one who came to him to beg for anything returned disappointed.

One day, he had fallen on the ground wounded, on the battle-field of Kurukshetra. Sri Krishna thought of testing his generosity at that time. He assumed the guise of a Brahmin and approached Karna. At that time, Karna had nothing which he could give away to the Brahmin. He thought, “What shall I give him? If he goes disappointed my principle of magnanimity will be broken and it will affect the reputation which I have maintained throughout my life.”

It is said, “Where there is a will, there is a way.” Karna had the desire of giving the Brahmin some gift. So, naturally, he thought of his teeth. One of his teeth had been fitted with a golden nail. As soon as he thought of this he took up a stone and struck that tooth and took it out. Breaking it into pieces he took off the golden nail and placed it at the feet of Sri Krishna who was in the guise of a Brahmin. Sri Krishna immensely pleased by his magnanimity revealed his real form to him and praised him heartily.

A lake whose waves were breaking on the bank said one day to a river, “You bring water from a great distance and pour it into the salt ocean, what wisdom is there in this action of yours?” The river replied, “My *dharma* or duty is always to give what I can without

expecting any result. The fulfilment of life lies in benevolence; in giving not in putting by and hoarding (water or anything).

Some months passed, the season of summer came. The lake had become dry. Its bottom was full of slime. Seeing its condition the river said, "Brother! Where is all your wealth of water which you had hoarded? I am alive and active even though I have grown thin because I always keep flowing and giving away my wealth endlessly."

On hearing this, the lake felt greatly ashamed and became completely dry. On account of remorse and sorrow, its chest became cracked and broken, but what is the use of regret or remorse when we have lost the opportunity of extending help to others?

The people of Denmark defeated king Alfred and his armies in a terrible battle. After being defeated king Alfred went away and hid himself in a fort. He had some soldiers also with him. As time passed, the food-stuffs they had with them were exhausted. Alfred himself remained without food for several days. In these circumstances, a soldier who had been starving for three days approached king Alfred and begged him for some food. King Alfred turned his eyes towards his wife. After several days of starving she had with great difficulty managed to secure a cake. The queen had cut the cake into two pieces so that she and the king might eat one piece each. King Alfred said to the queen, "Oh queen! I have sent some soldiers to secure food. They will surely bring something so, please give my share of the cake to this hungry soldier. I can wait." The queen heard this. She was equally generous. So, she gave both the pieces to the starving soldier. Their generosity brought immediate fruit. Soon the soldiers brought enough food and all ate to their satisfaction. The Buddhistic scholars have stated in their sacred books thus, "No gift is small if it is given with cheerfulness and a genuine spirit of compassion." A philosopher has said, "Do not take even if the heaven is offered to you, but give away even the heaven if you have to give it to others."

A fisherman has set an excellent example. Dobrive set out to a foreign country with his ship laden with merchandise. On the way, he happened to see a ship filled with slaves and when he saw them, his heart overflowed with compassion. After talking over the matter of with the master of that ship, he exchanged his ship for the ship of slaves. Then, finding out the addresses of the slaves, he sent them back to their homes. At last, a young lady and her slave-maid remained. The young lady was the daughter of the Emperor of Russia and she did not like to return home. Deeply moved by Dobrive's magnanimity, she married him. When Dobrive returned with his wife and the waiting-woman, his father was greatly angry.

Dobrive was sent again to sail to foreign countries to carry on business. On the way, he saw some people who had been arrested for not having paid the prescribed taxes. Selling away his merchandise, with the money he got from it, Dobrive paid the taxes for them. They were all released. All people heartily praised his magnanimity.

His father was again furious. But Dobrive was happy because he had rendered help to the needy. His father sent him again for the third time to foreign countries to carry on business. But this time, his father gave him enough advice.

The Emperor of Russia who was searching for his daughter happened to meet Dobrive: at a harbour and was greatly delighted to see his daughter's ring on his finger. After having heard the entire story, the Emperor said to Dobrive, "I shall return to Russia. My minister will be with you. Kindly come to Russia with your family."

Accordingly, Dobrive set out with his wife to Russia in the company of the minister. While they were sailing on the sea, the minister who had wicked motives pushed Dobrive into the sea. He thought, that the princess out of sheer helplessness would accept his love and that he would become the son-in-law of the Russian Emperor. He thought that if he succeeded in his objective, he

would acquire position and property. The princess did not like to marry the wicked minister; but they had to cross the sea. So, she tactfully smiled and said that she would give her decision after reaching home.

A fisherman rescued Dobrive from being drowned and brought him to Russia on the condition that he should give him half the property that he might get. The Emperor of Russia was greatly pleased to see Dobrive and bestowed upon him, his kingdom and his wealth. Dobrive pardoned the minister. According to his promise, Dobrive offered half his kingdom to the fisherman. But the fisherman did not receive it. The fisherman showed himself to be superior to Dobrive in nobility and magnanimity, by refusing to take what was offered to him.

Rahim Sahib who was himself a great benefactor believed that if one was offered some gift which one needed, he need not hesitate to accept it. His idea was that those who could afford to give away a gift would offer it to the needy and that those who needed something would ask for it.

Poor people approach a wealthy man. Therefore one need not hesitate to go to rich people for help.

While Rahim gave away anything, he would bend his eyes always towards the ground. When he was asked, why he did so, he replied.

“One may think, ‘I am a benefactor and I am giving away charity.’ But the actual giver is different. (God is the actual giver.) Therefore, on account of humility and doubt I keep my eyes bent towards the ground.”

This statement illustrates the truth that we should not feel proud, when we are giving away anything. Santa Tulasi Das has written:

दया धर्म का मूल है,

पाप-मूल अभिमान ॥

Dayā dharma kā mūl hai

Pāpa-mul abhimān

“Kindness or benevolence is the basis of *dharma* or righteousness. Pride is the cause of sin.” If there is pride in our benevolence, it brings an evil result; not merit. The people who are not benevolent but who are proud and arrogant are really pitiable. A poet using a *Chātaka* bird as a symbol teaches a truth to those who seek help from misers.

Once, a *Chātaka* bird felt very thirsty. Hoping to get water, it repeatedly looked towards the clouds, it begged the clouds for water. It made entreaties to the clouds for water; it narrated its anguish and it cringed for help. But the clouds thundering without raining were floating away. At that time a poet addressing the *Chātaka* bird said this—

रे रे चातक ! सावधानमनसा
मित्र ! क्षणं श्रूयताम् ।
अम्भोदा बहवो वसन्ति गगने
सर्वेऽपि न तादृशाः ॥
केचिद् वृष्टिभिरार्द्रयन्ति धरणीम्
गर्जन्ति केचिद् वृथा ।
यं यं पश्यसि तस्य तस्य पुरतो
मा ब्रूहि दीनं वचः ॥

*Re Re Chātak! Sāvadhānamanasā
Mitra! Kṣhaṇam Shruyatām
Ambhodhā Bahavo Vasanti gagane
Sarvepi na tadrushāḥ
Kechid Vrushitibhīrārdrayanti Dharanim
Garjanti Kechid Vrithā
Yaṁ Yaṁ Pashyasi tasya tasya purato
Mā brūhi dīnam Vachah.*

“Oh friend *Chātaka*! Listen to me attentively for a moment. There are countless clouds in the sky but all are not thus. (All are not givers of rain.) Some cause rain to fall and make the earth wet and happy but the others merely thunder and pass. Therefore do not entreat every cloud to help you.”

The inner meaning is that misers do not give any charity and that only those who are by nature benevolent give help to others.

15. RIGHTEOUSNESS

OH YOU LOVERS OF DHARMA OR RIGHTEOUSNESS !

Dharma or righteousness is the key with which we can wind the clock of life. In other words, it is the only real inspiration for life. Just as petrol is necessary for a car, just as fuel is necessary for the oven and just as food is necessary for the body, *dharma* or righteousness is essential for life. *Dharma* or righteousness is a value of life and it brings order, discipline and organisation into life. *Dharma* brings a balance into life and governs life. On account of *dharma*, life acquires meaning. It gives a direction to life.

Dharma or righteousness is an attribute of the soul. The two are inseparable. *Dharma* and the soul are inseparable, because it is the true nature or form of the soul.

वत्थुसहावो धम्मो ॥

Vāththu sahāvo dhammo.

The nature of a thing is its *dharma*.

According to the statement, the nature of fire is to burn; and the nature of water is to extinguish fire; but on account of its contact with fire, even water grows hot but if it is taken away from fire, even boiling water grows cool slowly because coolness is the nature of water. It is its natural quality. The heat that water acquires is a quality it acquires temporarily (*vibhāva*) and not nature (*swabhāva*). In the same manner, peacefulness is natural to the soul and a state of agitation or disturbance is unnatural to it. The *jīva* (the living being) becomes agitated or disturbed on account of the impact of passions and attachments. If the *jīva* discards those passions and

attachments, it resumes its true nature of peacefulness and felicity. We can experience spiritual peace and felicity by means of benevolence and pure conduct. Therefore, *dharma* in this context implies even those means of attaining peace such as pure conduct and benevolence. When we see a man, whom we consider as our enemy, we entertain such feelings as hatred, jealousy, anger and hostility. This is *adharmā* (this is ignobility). Therefore Lord Mahāvīr has said:

मित्री मे सव्वभूएसु ॥

Mitthi me Savvabhūyesu.

I have amity with all living beings.

It means that we should implant this lofty ideal in our minds and hearts because the feeling of amity helps *dharma* to flourish. It is *dharma* or a sense of righteousness that distinguishes human beings from brutes :

आहार-निद्रा-भय-मैथुनञ्च

सामान्यमेतत्पशुभिर्नराणाम् ।

धर्मो हि तेषामधिको विशेषो

धर्मेण हीनाः पशुभिः समानाः ॥

Ahāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunancha

Sāmānyametatpshubhirnarāṇām

Dharmo hi teshamadhiko vishesho

Dharmena hinah pashubhiḥ samānāḥ.

Eating food, sleep, fear and copulation are common to human beings and animals. *Dharma* or a sense of righteousness is the one quality that distinguishes human beings from animals. Therefore, human beings who are devoid of a sense of righteousness or *dharma* are equal to animals.

If Gandhiji was the gift of *dharma* to the whole country of *Bharat*, he by the power of *dharma* secured freedom for the country. Once someone said to him, “Mahatmaji! Though you have such a weak and slender body, you are very strong. In whatever direction you

place your steps, millions of people follow you, crores of people are ready to go to jail in obedience to your words. In whatever direction you look, crores of eyes converge towards the same direction. From where do you get such strength?"

Mahatmaji said, "That is not my strength. It is the strength of *dharma* or truth. I live according to truth and non-violence. I believe that truth is God and my strength is derived from truth."

The same gentleman asked him again, "Where can I find truth?"

Gandhiji replied, "One can find truth in one's own heart."

Like the quality of peace even truthfulness or love of truth is a natural quality of the soul. A child speaks the truth naturally. There is no need to think before speaking a truth. Thinking is necessary only to utter a lie. We have to utter a lie to conceal another and a third lie to conceal the second one. We have to search for new pretexts. A man reels under the weight of worries and his inborn, instinctive, natural peacefulness is lost.

Speaking the truth is natural to man. Nobody need be taught the way to speak the truth. Hence truth is the natural quality of the soul. It is right to do one's duty. There are hundreds of meanings that can be given to the word *dharma* but here is a brief statement of its meaning, "*Dharma* which is characterised by non-violence, self-discipline and austerity brings the highest happiness. Even gods salute one, who walks on the path of *dharma* or righteousness."—*Das'vaikālikasūtra*

Non-violence is a natural quality of the soul because 'all living beings love to live; not to die'. Just as we love to live, all other beings also love to live. Just as we do not like to be killed, all the other beings also do not like to be killed. We should do to others as we would be done by.

The enlightened always preach non-violence as their most important doctrine. "The essence of the knowledge of the enlightened is that they do not act violently and do not harm others." Violence and slaying are unrighteous (*adharma*). "Slaying animals is *adharma*." The noble people always keep away from violence.

The second objective of *dharma* is self-discipline. A car may be very expensive; it may be very beautiful to look at but nobody feels happy while sitting in it if it has no brakes because they fear accidents.

Self-discipline acts like brakes in life. It frees life from fears and anxieties. If the banks break, the water in the river flows over fields and villages causing loss and destruction. Self-discipline is like the banks for the river of life. If we have no self-discipline our life gets wasted and abused and our soul experiences a moral fall. "The *jiva* assumes a form (a body) only to acquire self-discipline and if we have no discipline, the body is useless. Just as a car is not safe if it has no brakes our body is not safe, if we do not have self-discipline.

Learned historians after doing a lot of research wrote a history of ancient Greek Civilization. The sum and substance of that book is that self-restraint and discipline elevated Greece to lofty heights and that it declined when it lost those virtues and fell into luxury.

The third aspect of *dharma* is *tapā* (penance). *Tapas* or penance is to endure peacefully and calmly all the physical and mental agonies and sorrows and all impediments. By means of *tapas* or austerity our soul grows resplendent.

(By means of *tapas* the innate splendour finds a manifestation.)

If we act according to *dharma* which is characterized by non-violence, self-discipline and *tapas* (austerity) we will be saved from all spiritual evils and disasters. "*Dharma* is the name given to the force that rescues the soul from the morass of evil." *Dharma* is like a light (a lighthouse) for the *jivas* (living beings) that are drifting on

the ocean of *samsāra* and are being drowned in it.” In the *Uttarādhyāyana Sūtra* it is said, “For the *jivas* (living beings) that are floating on the impetuous waves of old age and death, *dharma* is like a beacon-light, a giver of direction and the best refuge. In the same *grantha* (sacred book) elsewhere, Lord Mahāvīr has given this commandment: “Oh King! *Dharma* is the only strength and refuge for all living beings.” According to the *Vaisheshika* Philosophy, *dharma* brings us both materialistic and spiritual felicity and prosperity. *Dharma* is that by which we attain both external or physical and internal or spiritual felicity. If we attain materialistic prosperity by means of honesty and moral uprightness, there is *dharma* in it. In the same manner, it is *dharma* that enables us to discard our passions and attachments and to attain internal, spiritual excellence. *Dharma* is purity of the mind.

A cow may be black or brown or white or red but its milk is white. In the same manner, *dharma* is the same in all the different religions. We should not be led away by the outward labels; we should care for the quality of the article. Many people preach *dharma* which is shallow like skimmed milk and naturally it does not bring us peace or felicity. If we drink skimmed milk, we will have only the psychological satisfaction of having drunk milk, but we do not derive energy from it. Therefore, when we drink milk, we should test it and see whether it is fit to drink or not; whether it can give us strength or not. In the same manner, we should test *dharma* also, before we accept it. In the *Uttarādhyāyana Sūtra*, Lord Mahāvira has described the method of testing the soundness of *dharma*. He says, “Only the intelligence can test the *dharma*, analyse it and find out its soundness or otherwise.”

Common people do not have time to use their intelligence. Therefore, they blindly accept whatever is given to them in the name of *shāstras* and are deceived. For thousands of years, in India in the name of *shāstras*, *yagnas* (sacrifices of animals at rituals) have been taking place. The *pandits* (scholars) who liked to eat meat killed

animals at sacrifices, ate meat and forced even common people to eat meat in the name of *prasād* (God's gift). Therefore, Lord Mahāvira declared that we should examine the soundness of *dharma* by the exercise of our intelligence and then accept it if it is wholesome. Non-violence and ethical excellence constitute the very life of *dharma*; they are like oxygen for the existence of *dharma*. *Dharma* or religion cannot exist in their absence.

How did the Indian propagators of *dharma* carry out their task of preaching *dharma*? In this country, *dharma* was not preached on the basis of mere *shāstras* or with a desire to acquire wealth. The propagators of *dharma* always tried to expound their theories by way of logical reasoning. A man who has renounced life would not desire the wealth of others. The propagator of *dharma* wandered from place to place and tried to enlighten and brighten the minds and souls of people by means of his discourses. Hence, people became familiar with the true *dharma* and accepted it. The propagators of true *dharma* do not merely preach it. They also act according to it and practise their precepts, thus enabling people to acquire true knowledge and to realise that *dharma* is nothing but walking in the light of true knowledge. When we meet a man of high position, someone introduces him to us. In the same manner, *dharma* introduces our soul to us and makes us realise its true nature. Some people want to show themselves to be *dharmātāmās* but they cannot be *dharmātāmās* without purity of thought, feeling and action. If you ask a spoon how the *srikhand* (a preparation of curds and sugar) tastes, it will say that the dish is tasteless. The same thing applies to most people who preach *dharma* without practising it. You may go to religious places and you may perform religious rituals. But if you do all that to show that you are a religious person, you will not taste the sweetness of religion. All those things will be tasteless to you. We should get pure joy from the performance of religious austerities. They are not to be carried out as a matter of formality and imitation without a true knowledge of those activities.

A great preceptor was preaching a sermon to thousands of followers on the bank of a lake. The preacher felt an itching sensation on his back and he scratched his back with his fingers. The followers thought they too should do this action of scratching their backs with their fingers. The people in every line did the same. On account of this, unawares the people in the front line pushed those in the back line with their elbows. The people in every line did so and this continued upto the last line, and those in the last line pushed by the elbows of the people before them fell into the lake. When they came out with their wet clothes and asked those in front of them why they had pushed them thus, they said, "We do not know. We were standing behind and we were pushed by those in front of us." This was the answer given by those in every line. When finally, the question reached the preceptor himself and when he explained the reason for his action, all felt ashamed of their foolishness and stupidity. If you perform such rituals as *Pooja* (worship), *pratikramana*, *paushadha*, *tapa*, *prathyākhyāna*, *sāmāyik*, *vandan*, etc. merely imitating others without understanding their true significance, you will not get any benefit from them, you will be only wasting your time. Your soul must be involved in those activities. You should perform those activities only after understanding their true significance, otherwise you will have only the feeling of pride that you have performed religious activities. But, you will get no benefit from them. It will not be *dharma* but only a show of it.

A certain gentleman returned to his village after marrying a lady. The villagers could not believe that he was married because he had not brought his wife with him. His father-in-law and mother-in-law had told him that he could take his wife after a month. But the villagers here thought that he was uttering a lie. His sense of self-importance was offended. So, at once he returned to his father-in-law's house and told him that he would like to take his wife with him the very next day and requested him to make arrangements to that end. The father

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agreed to send the girl, the next day. Accordingly, he sent his daughter with him the next day.

He set off with his wife towards his village. On the way, they had to cross a river. The wife was waiting for an opportunity to tease her husband. Now, she got an excellent opportunity. She said, "My dear husband, my feet and toes are decorated with myrtle colour. If I wade through the river, it will be washed away. So, take me across the river in such a way that the water does not touch my feet." She wanted to enjoy a ride on his shoulders. The husband also was a physically strong fellow. He understood the meaning of her words and said, "Very good, I will manage it in such a way that the myrtle on your feet remains intact."

Carrying her on his chest with her feet upwards he began to wade through the water. Since her head was in the water, she could not breathe and so she died. Carrying her thus, he came to his village. He said to the people, "See here, I have brought my wife from my father-in-law's house." Someone said, "I say she is dead." The gentleman narrated the entire story and said, "Her life might have gone but the colour remains."

The people of the village laughed heartily at his foolishness. In the same manner we too carry the corpse of religious rituals and we become objects of ridicule because in our austerities there is no life. It is essential that we should fill our rituals with life (i.e. meaning) and carry them out with proper understanding of their significance. Our religion does not command us to carry its dead body. It commands us not to show off but to be sincere in our religious austerities.

A certain priest one day said to his wife, "Today don't prepare food for me because I have received an invitation from the Emperor to go to the palace and to read out the hymns of prayer. After the prayers there will be a royal banquet. They will serve delicious dishes and I will eat to my satisfaction. Therefore, it does not matter if I do not take food at home and remain hungry for sometime."

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The wife said, "Very good. Do as you wish. To-day I will not prepare food for you."

The priest went to the palace to preach and to read out the prayers. While he was reading out the prayers he was endeavouring to please his listeners and he never thought of God. After the prayer was over the dinner began. Various excellent dishes had been placed on tables. People sat on the chairs to eat food but all got up after having eaten two or three mouthfuls. The priest felt sad because social etiquette required that he too should get up with them otherwise the people there would think that he did not care for good manners and social formalities. He thought that they might laugh thinking that he must have been starving for days. So, he had to get up from his table though he did not like it. At once, he ran home and said to his wife, "Dear wife, I am dying with hunger. So, prepare food immediately and serve it to me."

The wife said, "Why? Were you not satisfied with the food served at the royal dinner?"

He narrated to her what had happened and why he had returned home so soon. The wife was a clever woman. She said, "Please read out the prayers once more. There you read the prayers to please the emperor and his guests and just to exhibit your way of reading out the prayers. Your objective was not to please god. Your prayers could not reach God and so the royal dinner could not reach your stomach. Now you read the prayers in such a way that they will reach God and if you do so I will prepare food for you." The moral of this story is that if you perform austerities, only to show off they will not reach the soul and they will not influence the soul.

He whose soul is pure and simple easily enters the needle-eye of dharma. We pass the thread through the eye of the needle before stitching anything. As long as the thread is pure and clean it keeps running through the needle's eye. But, if there is a knot in the thread, it impedes the movement of the thread. Our soul also cannot

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enter the needle eye of dharma, if it has knots and tangles of passions and attachments.

Dharma is the spring of the waters of virtue. We should seek quality not quantity in it.

There were four friends. They bought tickets for Poona and at Bombay-Central station they sat in a train that would go to Gujarat. The train began moving. At Dadar-station, the T.C. came to inspect their tickets. Seeing the ticket of one of them, he said, "There is some mistake in your ticket or you are travelling by this train by a mistake." He saw the second man's ticket and he said the same thing to him also. The first one shouted angrily. "You are wrong! Get out." The third man's ticket also had the word "Poona" on it. Even before the T.C. could say anything he said, "I have my ticket. In fact, you are without a ticket. So, you must get out or sit down quietly." The fourth man, seeing the word "Poona" on his ticket said to the T.C. "From which world have you arrived, Sir, you seem to be ignorant of the fact that our government is run on the basis of the majority's opinion. We four constitute the majority compared to you. We are travelling to Poona with tickets bought for Poona. So, this train must go to Poona. Just because one man, that is yourself, says so, the train cannot be the wrong one. We are right and you are wrong." Dharma or righteousness depends on sincerity and austerity not on the opinion of the majority.

16. FEARLESSNESS

OH FEARLESS PEOPLE!

Fear is the enemy of courage. Those living beings that do not commit sins are fearless. Only sinners shudder with fear at the thought of being caught and punished.

Man increases his wants observing the possessions of his neighbours. He wants to buy furniture, he desires sofa-sets, air-coolers, fridges, scooters, cars, aeroplanes etc. and there is no end to his desires. Man needs money to satisfy his desires. and he tries to earn money by foul means. He takes bribes. He acts dishonestly. He utters lies. He makes others utter lies. He deceives others and we do not know what other foul measures he employs to earn money. As his sinful actions increase his anxieties and fears also increase.

It is easy to fill our stomach but difficult to fill the iron-safe. We desire to fill our iron-safes. We desire to accumulate more and more wealth. But we forget the fact that desires are limitless like the sky. It is nothing but madness to endeavour to fulfil our desires because desires are endless. The poet Sundar says, "If we get ten, twenty or fifty, we desire for a thousand or a lakh. If we acquire crores and crores of rupees, we desire to become the masters of the world and then of the whole universe. Our hunger for wealth cannot be quenched. Self-contentment is the only way to keep out the tangle of desires." Here, the poet Sundar has stated that self-contentment is the only way to escape from the eternal perplexities of desires. If we are contented with a few possessions, the desire for many disappears. We should limit our desires and wants and a man who controls his desires does not earn

money by foul means and consequently he will be fearless. Fear makes us shudder and experience anxiety. On account of fear, our face grows dreary and dull and our strength is sapped.

Philosophers have mentioned four causes of fear. They are : 1. Lack of strength, 2. The Mohaniya Karma called fear, 3. Terrifying sights, 4. Recollection of the factors that cause fear.

A man who is courageous is fearless but a coward always experiences the anguish of fear. Therefore, all must try to acquire the qualities of strength, courage and self-confidence.

On account of the Mohaniya Karma fear appears. This fear can be dispelled only by means of *Tapasyā* (Performing an austerity). Various kinds of austerities are described in *shāstras*. Those are described in the *shāstras* not to enhance the glory of the *shāstras* but to help common people to attain strength, courage and spiritual excellence by performing them.

People shake with fear when they see wild animals like lions, bears, cobras etc. The very sight of them fills them with mortal dread. Those who are caught in the grip of fear at the sight of such terrible creatures cannot think of a way to get rid of that fear because their mental faculties are paralysed by fear.

It is nothing but foolishness to shudder at imagined fears. There is no sense in thus experiencing fear. In fact, present fears are less than horrible imaginings. It is not proper or sensible to shudder at imagined objects of danger.

These four causes of fear are described in the *Sthana-nga Sūtra*. In the same *sūtra*, elsewhere, there is a description of seven kinds of fear.

Fear is of seven kinds. They are : 1. Ihalokabhaya or fear that one's present life may be spoilt. 2. Paralokabhaya : fear that the next life may be spoilt. 3. Adanabhaya : fear relating to loss, theft, robbery, plunder, dissensions.

4. Akasmātbhaya : fearing accidents. 5. Vedanābhaya : fear of being pestered. 6. Fear of death. 7. Ashlokabhaya (fear of disgrace, disrepute, shame etc.)

How far is it proper to experience fear? The following stanza contains an answer to this question :

तावद् भयेषु भेतव्यम्
यावद् भयमनागतम् ।
आगतं तु भयं दृष्ट्वा
प्रहृतं व्यमर्शकया ॥

—चाणक्यनीतिः

*Tāvad bhayeshuhetavyam
Yāvad bhayamanāgatam
Āgatam tu bhayam drustvā
Prahartavyamashankayā—Chāṇakyanitih*

“It is proper to fear an object of danger until it does not approach us (we should be thinking of warding off the danger). But fear from the confrontation with danger should be destroyed without a doubt.”

Noble people are always fearless because they are not guilty of fraud, deception or manipulation etc. It has been said, “The lives of noble men are like open books and they do not fear anything.” People can learn the lesson of fearlessness from that open book of the life of noble people. Those who are fearless, desire to see fearlessness in others; therefore they are happy in carrying out the activities of their life. As opposed to such people, there are cowards. They always entertain various fears and they also fill others with such fears. Like people afflicted with some contagious disease, they keep spreading fear everywhere. Safety lies in keeping away from such people. In the *Prashna-vyākaraṇa sūtra* Lord Mahāvīr has given this commandment. “Do not fear anything. Fear soon surrounds those who fear.” Fear crowds around cowards. Therefore we should be fearless in doing our duties.

It is said that in the City of Baghdad, once fifty thousand people died of plague. Actually only five thousand people died of plague. The other forty five thousand people died of the fear of plague. Compared to plague itself, the fear of plague proved to be nine times more destructive and devastating.

In a village in the State of Bihar, once some one was arranging tiles over his house before the rainy season. While he was laying the tiles, he felt that a thorn pricked his finger. He ignored it and completed his work of laying the tiles over the roof of his house. One year later, when he was again arranging the tiles at that very spot, he saw the dead body of a snake which had dried up and was sticking there. Then, he remembered what had happened a year ago and thought that the snake must have bitten him. Paralysed by fear, he fell down from there; became unconscious and died within a few minutes. This incident illustrates how the fear of a snake-bite can be more dangerous than an actual snake.

Four boys went to Benaras to carry out their studies. Before they set out, an old woman who lived in the neighbourhood gave them each a cup of curds. After drinking the curds, they set out. Twelve years later after completing their education, they returned home. When they went to the old woman to salute her, she said, "Dear children! Are you alive? I gave you curds on that day and later I found a dead snake in the pot from which I took out the curds." On hearing this, suddenly all the four young men fell down unconscious and died. If a snake is poisonous, it can cause an immediate death by its bite but how can its poison kill people twelve years later? They died not on account of the effect of the snake's venom but on account of fear. Fear can cause such havoc.

There were seven men. One day they set out together to earn money. While they were travelling, the sun set. They thought it would be dangerous to travel in the night. So, they rested beneath a tree on the side of the road. They sat talking for a while and when they felt

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sleepy they lay down in a line. The first one began to think thus, "This is a wild forest. If a scorpion comes it will sting me first and on hearing my cries the others will climb the trees and I will have to die of the sting. Why should I be so foolish as to be stung by the scorpion? All are sleeping. Why should I not use this opportunity and why should I not change my place?" So thinking, he went and lay down at the other end. On account of this, the second one in the line became the first one. He too thought in the same manner and went and lay down at the other end. So, gradually all the others did the same. This process of changing places continued till the morning. When the sun rose, they found to their amazement that they had come to their own village and again they set out together to earn money.

Fear appears on account of the company in which we find ourselves.

Once, a lion's cub while wandering in a forest entered a group of jackals. Therefore, even after it grew up, it continued to be cowardly like jackals. One day a lion came there in search of prey. It began roaring. A lion does not hunt a prey without roaring. That is its nature. On hearing its roar, all the jackals ran helter-skelter. Even that cub which was in the company of the jackals began to run with fear. The lion caught hold of it and took it to a pond. The lion made the cub see its reflection in the water, and said that it was also a lion like him. The lion said, "Just as I can terrify animals by my roar, you too can." The cub realised its true nature. Its cowardice ended and it became fearless.

We too become cowardly when we are in the company of those who are steeped in the morass of passions and attachments. Though we are the devotees of Lord Mahāvira (the fearless one), we keep fearing all sorts of things. When our souls are enlightened and brightened by the words of Mahāvira (Jinavara) our fears disappear. When we look into the waters of the sacred lore we realise that there is no difference between our soul and that of

Lord Mahāvira. After being enlightened thus, if we roar we can see how the passions and attachments run away from us like those jackals. No one will be able to terrify or to disturb us.

A certain gentleman used to salute ascetics. He also used to salute the locks of his shop and his cash-box every-day. Why did he do so? He did so on account of the fear that Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth might get angry with him and go away from him. On account of his superstition he saluted the goddess of wealth with sincere devotion but he saluted the ascetics as a matter of formality just to show that he was a pious person. On one hand he performed the ritual of Pratikramaṇa, and recited to get rid of the eighteen sins; and counted the beads of his rosary uttering the name of the Lord and on the other hand, he would sit near his iron safe upto mid-night and would count the bundles of currency notes. In this manner, he used to play a double-role. The accumulation of wealth itself becomes a source of fear. Someone presented a golden brick to Guru Gorakhnāth. Placing the gold brick in his bag, he was travelling accompanied by his disciple. Wherever they halted on the way, he asked his disciple, Mathsyendranath, "Is there any cause of fear here?" On hearing this question several times from him, the disciple desired to know the cause for his preceptor's fear. On the way, they halted near a well. Leaving the bag with disciple he went to take a bath. The disciple noticed the golden brick in the bag. He took it out and threw it into the well, and he placed in the bag a stone of the same weight.

After completing their bath and prayers they proceeded on their way. When, on their way, they had to halt for a while the preceptor said, "I think, there is no cause of fear here." The disciple said, "What is it that ascetics can fear? The thing that was causing you fear is not there in the bag. I threw it into the well."

The preceptor noticed that there was only a stone in his bag. Throwing away the stone, he thanked his disciple for freeing him from his fear. Shankarāchārya has said,

अर्थमनर्थं भावय नित्यं

नास्ति ततः सुखलेशः सत्यं ।

पुत्रादपि धनभाजौ भीतिः

सर्वत्रैषा विहिता नीतिः ॥

—मं हमुदगरः

*Arthamanartham bhāvaya nityām
nāsthi tataḥ sukhaleśaḥ satyam*

*Putrādapi dhanabhājām bhitiḥ
Sarvathraishā vihitha nitiḥ.*

—Mohamudgara

“Think that wealth always brings miseries. Really we cannot get even the slightest happiness from it. Wealthy people fear their own sons. This truth is obvious every where.”

It is said here that a rich man fears his own sons. His fear is that his sons might kill him to take possession of his wealth. When wealth makes a rich man fear his own children there is no wonder in his fearing others.

This is one aspect of fear. It has another aspect, and this is its brighter aspect. Fear is acceptable if it impels people to do what is good. Sant Tulsidās says, “the fear of God, the fear of the preceptor and the fear of society make us pursue the path of righteousness, prevent us from doing evil deeds, make us self-disciplined, and impel us to do our duties. Nobody would say that such fear should be discarded.” It is said in the Bible that the fear of God causes the birth of knowledge in us. An enlightened man would not commit sins. He who fears God also would not commit sins. Therefore, these two types of persons are equal. He who is enlightened fears god and he who fears god is enlightened. A poet says that we should always fear two things. He says, “What are the things that we should always fear? We should fear social censure (loka nindā) and the wilderness of *Samsāra* (life).”

People censure a man who does evil things and so those who fear social censure always endeavour to resist

evil. In the same manner, people afraid of losing their way, walk on the road not through a forest. Life is like a wild forest. In life creatures wander about in various forms. Those who are afraid of losing their path prefer to walk on the path of dharma or righteousness. Tulsi Dās says that fear is essential for devotion. Kabir Dās is also of the same opinion. He considers fear a *Pārasmani* and says that no one should be fearless. He says, "All must show their devotion with fear and worship god with fear. Fear is like the *pārasmani* (the philosopher's stone) for all living beings. No one should be fearless. Fearlessness regarding god and preceptor instead of elevating us spiritually brings about our spiritual decline. On the contrary, fear in respect of god, preceptor, mother and father brings us spiritual elevation, progress and eminence and serves as a means of reforming our life. Let me try to illustrate this truth by means of an incident.

Once there was a beautiful city. There were thousands of beautiful mansions in it. In one mansion, a boy of about six years lived with his parents. That day being Sunday he had not gone to the school. It was about two O'clock. Sitting at the window, the boy was enjoying himself watching the manners and mannerisms of the people that passed by.

Just then a hawker was coming up, carrying fruits in a basket. He was singing a song to attract customers. Hearing the song and on seeing the fruits the boy desired to buy the fruits. He took a ten paise coin from his father's coat pocket. Coming down the steps from the room upstairs, he ran to the hawker and bought fruits for ten paise and ate them standing there. His tongue looked violet because of the fruits he had eaten. Now his problem was to conceal the colour of his tongue. If the people at home saw it, they would ask him a number of questions and his theft would be discovered. At last, the boy decided to keep his mouth shut. "If there is no flute, there can be no songs". He did not answer any question put by the people at home. His mother and father became anxious thinking that some dreadful disease

had struck him dumb. At once his father phoned up the doctor and requested him to come. The doctor came and after examining the boy said, "I will give him an injection. That will make him open his mouth at once." When the doctor took out the injection needle, the boy cried in great terror. "Please, do not give me any injection. There is nothing wrong with me. I stole ten paise from my father's pocket, bought fruits and ate them. My tongue was coloured violet and so I kept my mouth shut. Now, I say I am sorry and promise that I will never steal money again. Kindly pardon me". Thus fear itself reformed him.

The essence of all this is that fearlessness is a sign of courage and uprightness but fearlessness which makes us irresponsible is not acceptable.

17. HELPING OTHERS

DEAR CHARITABLE PEOPLE !

Lord Mahāvira, after having attained Keval jñāna (Perfect knowledge) began wandering from place to place preaching sermons and propogating his doctrines. Why did he do so? Did he want to start a tradition? Did he want to increase the number of his disciples? Did he desire for Fame? No, surely No. The only objective of his discourses was (Paropakāra) helping others, in their spiritual endeavours. He desired to disseminate the lofty truths he had discovered through years of concentration, meditation and contemplation so that all human beings might achieve spiritual welfare. The composers of *sūtras* have written, “The Lord delivered discourses only out of his kindness and compassion for all living beings.”

In the Hindu Shāstras, it is said that Lord Vishṇu assumed ten incarnations only to help people.

परोपकृतिकैवल्ये

तोलयित्वा जनार्दनः ।

गुर्वीमुपकृतिं मत्वा

ह्यवतारान् दशाग्रहीत् ॥

Paropakrutikaivalye

Toulayitvā Janardanaḥ

Gurvimumpakrutim matva

hyavatārān dashāgrahit

—*Subhāshitaratnabhaṇḍāgāraṁ*

“Lord Vishnu wieghed Paropakara (helping others) and Kaivalya (the state of absolute bliss) and found that benevolence was of greater weight and importance. Hence he incarnated himself ten times (to help people).”

If we help others and give joy to others, they too will reciprocate. Sant Tulsidās says that Paropkar or helping others is the greatest dharma (duty). He also says, “There is no *dharma* which is equal to benevolence and no *adharma* (unrighteousness) which is equal to causing harm to others.”

Only those who are benevolent are alive and the others who are not benevolent are as good as being dead.

आत्मार्थं जीव लोकेऽस्मिन्

को न जीवति मानवः ।

परं परोपकारार्थम्

यो जीवति स जीवति ॥

—सुभाषितरत्नभाण्डागारम्

Ātmārtham Jiv lokesmin

Ko na Jivati mānavah

Param paropakārārtham

Yo jivati sa jivati

—*Subhāshitaratnabhandāgāram*

“Who does not live in this world for his own sake? (That means all live to satisfy their selfish desires). But only those people really live who live for the good of others.”

Even grass is better than those who are not benevolent. A poet says, “Even grass is better than a person who is not helpful to others because grass is food to cattle and a symbol to be used by cowards in a battle field.” If while fighting in a battle field, a soldier loses his courage and confidence, he puts a few blades of grass into his mouth and escapes. The soldier’s idea is “I am like your cow. Do not kill me.” Realising this meaning of the symbol, the Victorious warrior pardons him and sends him away.

When an animal dies, its skin is used to make shoes. So, even after its death, an animal helps others. If a man does not help others, while he is alive, he is worse than an animal. It is said in *Sharnghadharapaddhati*, “We

should decry a man who does not help others. The skin of animals is useful to people after the death of the animals.”

Benevolence is a natural quality of noble people. Their nature is to help others without even thinking of their fitness to receive help. They are prepared to give even their life to help others. They do so because they know this great truth, “We should help others by giving away our wealth or even our lives because the merit accruing from benevolence is greater than the merit earned by the performance of hundreds of Yajnas (sacrifices).”

How does the human body acquire grace and beauty? It acquires beauty and grace not by wearing jewels and not by the application of sandal paste.

श्रुतं श्रुतेनैव न कुण्डलेन
दानेन पाणिर्न तु कंकणेन ।
विभाति कायः खलूसज्जनानाम्
परोपकारेण नतु चन्दनेन ॥
—भर्तृहरिः

*Shrotam Shrutenaiva na kundalena
Dānena pāṇirna tu kankanena
Vibhāti kāyah khalusajjanānām
Paropkāreṇa natu chandanena*

—*Bhartruhariḥ*

“The ears look beautiful and graceful not on account of ear-rings but by hearing discourses. The hand looks beautiful and graceful by giving help to others not because of bangles. Truly, the bodies of noble people look graceful and beautiful because of their benevolence not because of the application of sandal paste.”

A true benefactor does not wait until a suppliant asks for help. Bhartruhari says, “The sun makes lotuses bloom without being entreated to do so. The moon makes Kumudas (night lotuses) bloom without being entreated to do so. The clouds give water without being entreated to do so. Similarly, noble men naturally and spontaneously help others.”

It is a great virtue to help others and a vice to seek help from others. Like rivers, clouds, the sun, the moon and the earth, great men do not expect any return or reward for their deeds of benevolence.

It is said in Sthānanga Sūtra that it is impossible to repay the help given to us by three types of persons. It is said, "Oh! noble Shramaṇa! It is impossible to repay the help given to us by these three kinds of persons. (1) Parents, (2) the master, (3) the preceptor." This is so because whatever we may do to repay the help given by them to us we cannot repay it fully. Whatever noble people possess is meant to be given away in charity. "Rivers do not drink their water, trees do not eat their fruits, clouds do not eat the crops. So also the wealth of noble men is not used by them. It is meant for helping others".

It is said in the Neeti Pradeepa, What does the sea do with its gems? What do the Vindhya mountains do with their elephants? What does the Malaya mountain do with the sandal wood?" (The implication is that they do not use them for their own benefit). Similarly the wealth of noble people is meant for the benefit of others.

Nāgashri gave a preparation made out of bitter greens to Dharmaruchi Anāgar, when he came for Gochari (food). The preceptor found out that it was not fit to be eaten. So, he ordered Dharmaruchi to take it out of the town and to throw it away in a place where no one might eat it. Carrying it he went out of the town. When he threw a part of it on the ground, some ants which ate it died immediately. Dharmaruchi thought that if he threw the stuff there thousands of ants might eat it attracted by the smell of ghee and die. He decided that instead of causing the death of so many ants, he had better eat it and die and he did so. To help other jivas, Dharmaruchi sacrificed his life thus.

Once, Sir Philip Sidney a great poet and soldier lay mortally wounded in a battle field. He was feeling extremely thirsty. Another soldier with great difficulty secured a cup of water and gave it to him. When he was about to

drink the water, he noticed another wounded soldier who lay nearby looking intently at the cup. Sir Philip Sidney found that he was more thirsty than he and that soldier's need was greater than his. Taking pity on the soldier, he thought, "All those who are wounded must die in a short time, if not now, a little time later. Let me do a good deed before I die." Even before being asked for it Sir Philip Sidney gave him the cup of water. Blessed are those who render help to others even when they are dying.

A similar inspiring event took place in the life of Santa Ekanāth. Once Santa Ekanāth was going on a Pilgrimage carrying the holy water of the Ganga accompanied by his friends and disciples. On the way, he saw a donkey standing by the road. It was suffering from great thirst. Santa Ekanāth pitying the animal gave all the holy water to it. After drinking the water, the donkey ran away in great joy. His friends and disciples said, "Master ! You have given away to the donkey the holy water which we brought with great difficulty over a long distance. Now, how will you perform the ablution ceremony for Lord Pandarināth?" Santa Ekanāth replied in a dignified tone, "Friends ! the holy water which I gave the thirsty donkey has directly reached the holy feet of Lord Pandarināth. Lord Pandarināth himself came here in the guise of a donkey." The following incident that took place in the life of Maharshi (saint) Abu-Ali-Dakkak illustrates how great men derive delight from helping others. One day, Dakkak was invited to a dinner in a rich man's house. He set out to the rich man's house. On the way, he heard an old woman saying, "Oh God! You have granted me many children but you have not given me the means to feed them. Your dispensation is mysterious and strange." After hearing this, the saint continued on his way. He said to the rich man after reaching his house, "Please give me a large plate full of food." At once, the rich man gave him a large plate full of excellent dishes. The saint carrying the plate on his head went to the house of the old woman. He placed the plate before her. She began to dance with delight on seeing the food. Dakkak felt

happy to see her joy and he returned home hungry. This is true benevolence.

Here is the example of another Muslim saint. Abul Kassim Nashoravadi had gone to Mecca seventy times. Once on his way, he saw a hungry dog. At that time, he had nothing to give it. Suddenly an idea flashed to him. He began shouting aloud, "I am prepared to give away the merit of forty pilgrimages to Mecca in exchange for a loaf of bread. If any one is willing to take it and give me bread, let him come forward."

Hearing this, a Pilgrim came forward. He gave Abul Kassim some bread in exchange for the merit of forty pilgrimages to Mecca. With great tenderness and compassion, Abul Kassim gave the bread to the dog and proceeded on his pilgrimage. What a great sacrifice it is ! What bewidling benevolence !

Saint Vinobhā has described the difference between Devas (gods) and Rakshasas (demons). He says, "Those who give away in charity are gods and those who hoard wealth with cupidity are demons."

A certain king asked his minister, "What is the difference between gods and demons?" The minister said, "I will give you my reply to this question tomorrow." The next day, he invited one hundred brāhmins to the palace to a dinner. First, he made fifty brāhmins sit in two lines of twenty five each, each line facing the other. He ordered servants to tie the right hands of the brāhmins with bamboo sticks, so, that they might not bend them. The result was when the food was served, the brāhmins remained hungry unable to eat the food. Only when their hands were freed, they ate the food. One hour later, the other fifty brāhmins were made to sit in the same manner, facing each other, with their right hands bound to bamboo sticks. But these brahmins thought, "Our hands are tied. We cannot bend them, but we can feed those who are near us." Accordingly, they fed one another and each man ate to his satisfaction. At the end, the King sent them away with gifts.

The minister said to the King, "Your Highness! All this was arranged to answer your question. The brāhmins who were not willing to feed others are Dānavas (demons) and those who fed others are devas (gods)".

Oliver Goldsmith, the English poet and essayist was also a doctor. One day, an incident took place in his life. A certain lady whose husband was seriously ill took Goldsmith to cure her husband of his illness. Within a few minutes, Goldsmith realised that the man was ill because of poverty. He said to the lady, "I will send some medicine. Give it to your husband. It will immediately bring him relief. Don't worry." After going home, Goldsmith sent a packet to the lady. It was written on the packet, "Use this only if it is absolutely necessary to use it." When she opened the packet, she found in it ten gold sovereigns. The sight of the money gave the husband immediate relief. They thanked the poet for his generosity. The purpose of the perishable human body and the transitory human life is to help others. Hence, we must always be benevolent.

Just as poverty causes disease, it can also cause disputes and dissensions.

King Bhoja once was going about the streets of his city, Dhārānagari, in disguise to observe personally the difficulties of his subjects. He happened to be passing by the house of a poor brahmin. He heard the noises of people quarrelling and beating one another. He heard the voices of two ladies and a man. He found out that they were the mother, the son and the son's wife. The King noted the number of the house and went away.

The next day, the brāhmin was summoned to the court. The King asked him, "Oh Brāhmin! You are a scholar. You are educated and you are a poet. Yet, you quarrel with the members of your family, why?" The brāhmin said, "Your highness! In our family such quarrels always take place because every member hates the other. I do not know who is to blame among us. I cannot say who is guilty. My mother does not like me and my wife.

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My wife does not like me and my mother and I do not like my mother and my wife. You tell me who is guilty among us?" "The King said, "Oh Brāhmin! the fault lies with your poverty because, the intellectual abilities of a poor man are destroyed by his worries". Saying this the King gave him a gift of one lakh gold coins. His wife and his mother felt greatly delighted to see the money. After the cause of their quarrels was removed, they lived happily.

Where can we find a noble man who is self-contented; who deems even the small virtues of others as great; whose mind, heart, word and body are filled with the nectar of nobility and who always endeavours to delight the three worlds by his deeds of generosity?

18. SELF-CONTROL

OH ! YOU PEOPLE THAT LOVE SELF-RESTRAINT!

The mind performs two actions, namely, worrying and reflection. Worry is more dreadful than the funeral-pyre because if the funeral pyre burns a dead body, worry burns a living person always. Worry is like fire. It can burn a man to ashes.

Calm reflection is one action that the mind performs. Even this is like fire but it burns Karmas (Our attachments, passions etc.) and it does not affect the bodily health.

मन एव मनुष्याणां

कारणं बंध मोक्षयोः

Mana eva manushyānām

Kāraṇam bandha mokshayoh

“The mind is the cause of bondage and release.”

If the mind gets interested in sensual delights it binds us in *Samsāra*, and if it renounces desires and passions, it brings us the freedom, Moksha or salvation. If the mind burns with the fire of passion, it burns even the soul, and pollutes it and if such a soul is subjected to the purifying power of contemplation, it becomes cool, pure and radiant.

Worry leads us towards bondage but reflection leads us towards salvation. Worry is despicable. Reflection is commendable and acceptable.

Some people believe that the quality of the mind depends on the nature of the food we eat. Here is a proverb, “As is your food, so is your mood.”

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Food can influence the atoms in us. Foul food pollutes the mind and wholesome food keeps it pure. We cannot go to a foreign country without a passport. In the same manner without wholesome food we cannot traverse from noble thoughts to noble deeds and from deeds to noble existence.

Now-a-days people do not care for the quality of the food they eat. 80% of people eat such food as brings a roaring business to doctors. Food which is devoid of quality upsets the stomach. Hotels flourish and hospitals also increase in number. For both the cause is the absence of discipline and choice with respect to food.

Hotels warn people against going to them. Their names are written in big letters, 'Hindu Hotel'. 'Hindu Hotel' means 'If you are a Hindu 'tel'-turn away-get away from us. If you come in you will lose your health.' But people who are slaves to taste go to hotels.

The love of taste is in the mind. The hunger of the stomach can be satisfied by wholesome food but the hunger of the mind cannot be satisfied thus. People who are slaves of taste keep visiting hotels and hospitals and wasting money.

The best way to keep up the purity of our mind is to learn to live properly in the present and to keep the mind free from worries about the future. Darwin proved that man evolved from the apeman (monkey) but if we ask a monkey it will say that man is the corrupt form of the monkey because the monkey is free from the worries about the past and the future, while man is not. The monkey is totally delivered from worries. It lives in the present above the worries of the past and the future. We should derive light and inspiration from the past. The past should not be a burden to us. If our present life is joyful, gentle and pure, our future also will be good. Therefore, we should not commit the error of plunging into the past and flowing through the future. We should swim through the present.

As long as the boat keeps sailing on the water, there is no need for any fear or worry. Fear and worry begin

when water enters the boat. As long as we keep sailing on the waves of *samsāra* (life) we need not fear anything, but we should see that the water of passion and attachment does not enter the boat of our life.

In the Kitchen, fire burns in the oven. The smoke emerging from the oven blackens the walls and roof of the kitchen. In consequence, the beauty of the room is lost. The condition of the mind is also similar. The mind is blackened by the smoke of passions and its beauty is lost consequently.

As long as the mind is impure, beauty, felicity and peace cannot dwell in it. The mind is the only enemy which should be conquered. "True victory is victory over the mind and real defeat is to be enslaved by the mind." Those who are enslaved by the mind have to face defeat in the battle of life. True victory is the conquest of the mind. To conquer the mind we should check its changing propensities and compel it to obey us. *Yoga* means controlling and disciplining the mind. Our good and evil deeds are connected with our mind not with our body. It is said, "The sin committed by the mind is truly a sin. The sin of body is not a sin." A man embraces his wife as well as his daughter. The difference between the two actions lies in the mental attitude behind them. A doctor uses a knife. A robber also uses a knife but the former uses the knife to help people, to do a good deed, and the latter uses the knife to kill people. Both a good man and a bad man use their minds for thinking and reflection. A wicked man uses his mental power of thinking to harm others while a good man uses it to help others.

Mahatma Gandhi studied the *Gita* and thought about it for forty years and then he wrote *Anāsakti Yoga*. Sri Aurobindo, even after plunging into the waters of contemplation for forty years said that his quest was not over.

Vāchaspati Mishra, after his marriage, began to write a commentary on *Sāṅkhya Kārikā*. He was working with such concentration that he forgot his wife. For years, she had been serving him but he did not see her face

at any time. One day, the light went out because the oil in it had been exhausted. His wife poured oil into it and lighted it. Then his eyes fell on her face. He said, "Oh you respected woman! Who are you? I think I have seen you somewhere before. I do not remember where I saw you." The lady said, "Sir, first complete the composition of your work. Then you will remember who I am. If you cannot remember even then, I will tell you."

Mishra said, "It is certain that you are not my sister. You must be somebody else; you are a beautiful, young lady. How did you have the courage to come alone into my room at such a time as this? I am unable to understand this. I have almost completed writing my work. In fact, I am writing the last page. Kindly tell me who you are. I am eager to know who you are." Seeing his curiosity, she said, "I am your wife, Bhāmati. From the time you married me, you have been writing and I have been serving you. During these years, you never looked at me but I have been seeing you." Greatly moved by her words he said, "Dear! your *tapasyā* is the basis of whatever little I have written. Your selfless service is its basis, therefore, I shall name work after you. I shall call it *Bhāmatitikā*. Thus your name and my name will become immortal."

Today that great work is available. It stands as a symbol of Vāchaspathi Mishra's contemplation, reflection, dedication and achievement.

The following incident illustrates the havoc that an idle mind can cause. When the British army invaded Lucknow and occupied it the armies of the Nawab ran away. When the British soldiers surrounded the palace all the workers in the palace ran away to save their lives. The British soldiers entered the Nawab's chambers and found him sitting there, quietly. A British soldier asked him, "All your body-guards have run away. Why have you not run away?" The Nawab replied, "I am quite ready to run away. But there is no servant here to help me with my shoes. How can I run without my shoes?" This is an example of our dependence on

luxury and on others. If we do not control our mind our body becomes a slave to it like the Nawab who had become a slave to his servants. It is said in the *Yoga-vaśiṣṭa*, “The mind is like a dead thing because it is devoid of form and substance. This dead mind enslaves people. How wonderful is this foolishness?”

The following incident illustrates how the mind defeats and enslaves man by means of its desires. Alexander invaded India and occupied some areas. He happened to meet a *Mahātmā* (a great man). With great pride, he introduced himself to the *Mahātmā*, “I am Alexander. I have conquered many countries and I am trying to conquer India.” The *Mahātmā* said, “After conquering India what will you do?” Alexander said, “I will conquer Africa.” The *Mahātmā* said, “What will you do after conquering Africa?” Alexander said, “Gradually I will conquer the whole world.” The *mahātmā* said, “Very good, after conquering the whole world, what will you do?”

Alexander said, “I will conquer the stars one by one.”

The *Mahātmā* said, “Very good. I wish to know what you will do after conquering the entire universe.” Alexander said, “After that I will sleep happily.” The *Mahātmā* said, “You are really a wonderful man. If sleeping happily at the end is your objective you can do so now. Why should you think of sleeping happily after so many battles, conflicts, plunders and massacres?” Alexander was speechless.

Happiness lies in contentment.

संतोषः परमं सुखम् ।

Santoshah Paramam Sukham.

The highest felicity lies in contentment.

A certain old lady was searching for a needle in the light of a street-light, that is near an electric pole. She was greatly worried because she could not find it. Someone asked her, “Where did you lose your needle?” She said, “I lost it in my house.” The man said, “Then you search for it in your house. Why do you search for it

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here?" The old woman said, "I am searching for it here because here there is light and there is no light in the house." We may laugh at the old woman. But we too are foolish in the same manner; Peace dwells in our own mind but we search for it in external objects though it is not there.

Once a gentleman had some difficulty in breathing. The doctor came and examined him. He could not find out what his ailment was. He advised the gentleman, "Go to London. There perhaps your disease may be cured." The gentleman was affluent. He went to London seeking a cure for his ailment. There an expert examined him. He too could not discover what his disease was. He said, "There seems to be something wrong with your teeth. So you go to a dentist." When he went to a dentist even he could not discover his ailment. He however gave this advice to the gentleman, "If all your teeth are removed and if you get a new set of teeth it may give you relief." The gentleman agreed to this suggestion. But even after his teeth were removed and a new set of teeth was given to him by the dentist, he continued to have the same difficulty in breathing. The dentist said, "Your disease seems to be a new one. That is why no doctor has been able to cure it. It must be some dreadful disease. So, please go back to your country at once and spend the last moments of your life happily with your family. Nothing else can be done." The gentleman returned home. He thought, "Any way, I am going to die very soon. Let me live happily during my last days."

He sent for his tailor. He told his tailor, "Take the necessary measurements and stitch for me some excellent suits and bring them as soon as possible." The tailor took the measurements. His collar measurement was usually 12 inches. Now it was 14 inches. The tailor had stitched his earlier coat with a collar of 12 inches. The gentleman said, "Do not make the coat peculiar. Retain the same measurement. Let the collar be 12 inches." The tailor said, "I can retain the same measurement. But

your neck has grown larger and so with a collar of 12 inches you will find it difficult to breathe." On hearing this, the gentleman began to dance with delight. Laughing at his own foolishness, he said, "When the true doctor is here, near my house, I went abroad unnecessarily. What a fool I am!"

Where the disease arises its remedy also lies there. If an agitation appears in our mind, peace also lies in our mind, not elsewhere. But, this can be known only when we acquire true knowledge. "We should always bathe our minds in the sublime waters of knowledge but people have greater faith in the water of Ganga than in the water of knowledge. One day, Guru Nānak was bathing in the Ganga. Just then, he noticed a Brāhmin taking the water of the Ganga with his hands and drinking it. Nānak said, "Brother! Take that cup of mine which lies there and drink water with it." The Brāhmin said, "No, your cup is unholy." Nānak said, "The cup does not utter a lie, does not steal anything, does not cause harm to others and it does not also do any immoral things. How can it be unholy?" The Brahmin said, "Only a Brāhmin's cup is holy; not others?" Nānak said, "How do you say it is not holy? I washed it three times in the holy water of the Ganga!" The Brāhmin said, "That does not make any difference." Guru Nānak said, "I wanted to hear this from you. If a cup does not become pure after being washed three times in the water of the Ganga, how can a man become holy by taking a bath in the Ganga? A bath in the Ganga may cleanse the body, not the mind. No man can be pure as long as he has such evil feelings as hatred and contempt for others and as long as he believes that others are untouchable or unholy. Even if such a man bathes a thousand times in the Ganga or even if he remains in the Ganga like a fish, he cannot become pure and holy." The Brāhmin became speechless on hearing this, but he was not prepared to discard his prejudices.

We see in our dreams during nights what we think of during the day time. Sometimes dreams also cause

troubles to us. These truths are illustrated by the following examples :

Once there was a beggar. He was one night sleeping on the footpath near the shop of a jeweller. On that night, a marriage procession was passing by that road. The bridegroom was riding on a horse to the accompaniment of band and dances. There were bright lights adding to the splendour of the procession. Not only the bridegroom but also his horse was decorated with flowers.

The beggar began to think, "I have bought a lottery ticket paying one rupee. If I get the first prize of ten lakhs, I will also buy a bungalow and I will also ride like this bridegroom to marry a beautiful girl." As he lay thinking, he slept and he saw a splendid dream. He had got the first prize. His photograph had appeared in papers. He had bought a bungalow for five lakhs. Hundreds of proposals came to him. He chose a beautiful girl from among them. Wearing the dress and decorations of a bridegroom he too was riding on a horse at the head of the bridal procession. He approached the house where his father-in-law, mother-in-law and his prospective wife were staying. They received him with great honour. He sat in the marriage pandal by the side of the bride. The time came for joining their hands. To hold his bride's hand, he stretched his hand but he could not hold the bride's hand but someone struck his hand with a *lathi*. Waking up from his sleep, he said, "Watchman! If you had waited for two minutes, I would have at least held the hand of my bride." He described the whole dream to him. The watchman said, "I thought you were a thief because you were stretching your hand towards the lock of the shop. That was why I struck your hand. I did my duty. How could I know that you were stretching your hand to hold your bride's hand. At any rate, don't dream of marriages, otherwise you will have to receive beatings thus."

The second example is that of a cloth merchant. One day the merchant had excellent business. Throughout

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the day the merchant had been cutting cloth and giving it to his customers. On that day, he was not free even for a minute. That night in his dream also he continued to see the same crowds in his shop. In the same manner he was cutting cloth and giving it to his customers. The next morning, when he woke up from his sleep, he found that he had torn his *dhothi* into pieces.

Such a thing happened because he had no control over his mind. When the mind is not controlled, it causes such havoc; so we should keep our mind in our control.

19. WISDOM

OH YOU WISE PEOPLE!

Contemplation is connected with the intellect while wisdom is connected with intelligence. *Viveka* or wisdom has been defined as the power of distinguishing between what is fit to be accepted and what deserves to be rejected. With the eye of wisdom, we can understand what should be done and what should not be done.

एको हि चक्षुरमलः सहजो विवेकः ॥

Eko hi chaksurmalah sahajo vivekah.

“Wisdom is the only natural and pure eye.”

In fact, like the preceptor wisdom enables us to distinguish between what is to be done and what is not to be done in a situation. Moreover, it is wisdom that enables us to derive true benefit from the *shāstras*. Swāmi Satyabhakta has defined wisdom thus, “What is good? What is evil? What doctrines bring welfare to the whole world? Wisdom enables us how to answer these questions and it is indeed the very life of all *shāstras*.”

It is likely that pride and delusion obstruct the eye of wisdom. On account of pride we are likely to slight the doctrines of others. Delusion makes us “frogs in the well.” Such people will not be impartial and will not have the courage of conviction to declare their opinions as the great Jain Achārya Haribhadra Soori did.

पक्षपातो न मे वीरे

न द्वेषः कपिलादिषु

युक्तिमद्वचनं यस्य

तस्य कार्यः परिग्रहः ॥

*Pakshapāto na me vire
na dvेषाḥ Kapiladishu
Yuktimadvachanaṁ Yasya
Tasya Karyaḥ Parigrahaḥ.*

“I am not partial to Mahavira, nor am I prejudiced against Kapila Maharshi (the exponent of the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy) and other scholars. I accept the theories of those whose arguments and expositions are logical, sensible and enlightened.”

Once, Adishankarāchārya was returning to his *āshram* after having taken a bath. By chance, on the way, he happened to touch a *Bhangi* (Harijan). Shankarāchārya angrily said “I say, are you blind? Can’t you see that I am returning from the river after taking a bath? By touching me you have made me impure and unholy. I have to go again to the river and take a bath.”

The *bhangi* said, “I think you are the exponent of the *Advaita* Philosophy?” Shankarāchārya said, “Of course. I am the exponent of the *Advaita* Philosophy.” The *bhangi* said, “*Brahman* is true, the perceptible world is unreal. The *jiva* himself is the *brahman*, and the *brahman* is not different from the *jiva*. I think this is what you have been preaching?”

Shankarāchārya said, “Yes, that is my philosophy.”

The *bhangi* said, “If the same supreme reality, namely, *brahman* is present in me and in you how can my touch make you impure and unholy? If you really believe in your philosophy you would not have shown such discrimination. Another point is this. The *brahman* is pure but the body is impure because it is made up of such things as muscles, bones and many disgusting and impure things. If one impure body touches another impure body it does not matter. Please think about it.”

Shankarāchārya had defeated many great scholars by his arguments but he could not answer the questions of the *bhangi*. He saluted the *bhangi* and said, “Today, you have opened my eyes. You have taught me that our

philosophies are not to be adored merely as theories but are to be used to reform life. I am grateful to you. I will not go back to the river to take a bath again. I will straight go to my *āshram*.”

Because Shankarāchārya possessed true wisdom, he accepted the argument of the *bhāngi*. Wisdom dwells with humility. Pride and delusion eclipse the eye of wisdom.

One who has no wisdom is blind though one has eyes. The man who does not have the eye of wisdom is born-blind. Chāṅakya describes how *viveka* or wisdom shines brightly in the midst of other virtues.

विवेकिनमनुप्राप्ताः

गुणायन्ति मनोज्ञताम्

सुतरां रत्नमाभाति

चामीकरनियोजितम् ॥

Vivekinmanuprāptāḥ

Guṇāyanti manogñatām

Sutarām ratnamābhāti

Chāmikaraniyojitām

“All the virtues of a man acquire brightness if he has wisdom just as precious stones acquire lustre when they are studded to a gold ornament.”

The precious stones acquire lustre from gold, and gold acquires lustre from precious stones. In the same manner, the other virtues of a man acquire brightness from his wisdom; and his wisdom acquires lustre from his other virtues.

In the human body, the ears are open; the eyes are covered with lids that move (virtually they are open), the nostrils are open but the tongue is kept under control. There are thirty-two guards to keep it under control and it is covered by the two lips. It is placed thus because it has to utter words only with great wisdom; otherwise what it utters can cause great harm.

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रे जिह्वे ! कुरु मर्यादाम्
 भोजने वचने तथा ।
 वचने प्राण संदेहो
 भोजने चाप्यजीर्णता ॥

*Re jihve! Kuru maryadām
 Bhojane vachane tathā
 Vachane Prāna-sandeho
 Bhojane chāpyajirṇata*

“Oh tongue! be discreet and disciplined in eating and speaking. Otherwise indiscreet speech may cause serious dangers to life itself and immoderate eating can cause indigestion.”

Those who believe in nature-cure say that one-third of what we eat keeps us alive and two-thirds of it keeps our doctors alive. The meaning of this is we require only one-third of what we eat and anything more than that causes indigestion. It is said that most diseases originate from indigestion. If we get some diseases, we have to go to doctors, and pay them what they demand and that enables them to live happily.

The other task of the tongue is speech. Even if we speak the truth if it is devoid of wisdom such a speech can cause much harm. Therefore, a great poet has said,

सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात्
 न ब्रूयात्सत्यमप्रियम्
 प्रियं च नानृतं ब्रूया-
 देश धर्मः सनातनः ॥

*Satyam bruyātpriyam bruyāt
 na bruyātsatyamapriyam
 Priyam cha nānṛtaṁ bruyā-
 Desha dharmā sanātanaḥ*

“You should speak the truth but speak the truth that is benign and pleasant to others. Do not speak a disagreeable truth. Speak the truth that is benevolent to others. This is an eternal principle of conduct.”

If you call a blind man *Soordās* (*Soordās* was blind), he may not feel unhappy. If somebody says to you, "You are a dishonest man. You are a thief." You will become angry. But if the same person tells you, "You must be honest and you must become rich", you will not feel unhappy though the meaning is the same.

An Emperor had a dream in which he saw all his thirty-two teeth falling. He asked an astrologer to tell him what the dream signified. The astrologer who was unwise and tactless said, "Your Highness! It signifies that all the members of your family will die before you." The Emperor was angry and unhappy to hear this. He consulted another astrologer. He said, "Your Highness, your dream is a very auspicious one. It signifies that God has blessed you with a long life and that you will live longer than any other member of your family."

Both the astrologers gave the same interpretation but the ways in which they expressed their opinions differed. The first astrologer was unwise and tactless and the second one was wise and tactful. The result was the Emperor honoured the second astrologer with gifts but did not give any gift to the first one. Wisdom helps us to exercise our intellectual powers profitably. But an unwise man, using his intellectual powers causes great harm to himself and to others. The great poet Rāmādhāri Simha (Dinakar) says, "Intelligence is the slave of desires; Science is the slave of death. Oh God! What will happen to the universe since man has not yet grown wise?" The man who made the atom bomb had to face a severe disaster. He had to die weeping over what he had made. His last words were, "I shall go to hell."

A poet has said, "After the birds have eaten the harvest what is the use of repentance or regret? Oh traveller, awake! The day has dawned. You cannot sleep any more because the night has ended."

A word uttered with compassion and wisdom can save a man from distress and bring him joy and cheerfulness but the same word uttered unwisely can wound

the feelings of others and can cause distress to them. A word uttered unwisely can cause the killing of thousands of people, but the same word uttered wisely and sensibly can save the lives of thousands of people. It is said,

“Speak well and wisely if you can because speech is precious. Think well and weigh your thoughts before giving them expression in the form of speech.”

If you want to speak, speak after thinking well. Speak wisely. *Dharma* lies in wisdom.

Ganadhar Gautama Swamy asked Lord Mahāvira, “Oh Lord! How should I move? How should I stand? How should I sit? How should I sleep? How should I eat? and How should I speak? How can I act so that these actions of mine do not bind me in sin and *Karma*?” Lord Mahāvira replied, “Walk carefully, stand carefully. Be careful in your actions of sitting, sleeping and eating and if you do so, *sins* and *karmas* will not bind you.”

If a car has no brakes, even if it is a very beautiful car nobody likes to travel by it. If your speech is not controlled by the brakes of your wisdom, nobody likes to hear it though it may be beautiful and fascinating.

The Pandavas got a magnificent palace built. They invited the Kauravas to see it. The Kauravas came. The Pandavas took them through the palace showing them its various chambers. The floor in a chamber appeared to be water in a pond. Thinking that it was water, the Kauravas stepped on it keeping off the edges of their garments lest they should be drenched in the water. The Pandavas felt like laughing, but being wise, they suppressed their laughter. They went further into another chamber. There was water in it. But, it appeared to be solid floor, the Kauravas walked into the chamber carelessly. The water splashed and their garments were drenched. They reached a door which was like a wall. Duryodhana stopped there. When he was told that it was a door, he walked forward. A little later they came to a wall which was like a door, Duryodhana walked forth and was slightly injured. The Pandavas controlled their

laughter but Draupadi could not control her laughter. She could not use the brakes of wisdom to check her laughter. She said, "Even the children of the blind become blind" and laughed.

Duryodhana was furious because what she said was an insult to him and his father. Angrily he vowed, "You have insulted me. I will take revenge against you by making you sit upon my thigh, in my court in the presence of all my courtiers. If I do not do so, I am not Duryodhana." On hearing this, Bhima also vowed, "Oh ! Draupadi, I will hit the thigh of Duryodhana with my club wielded by my strong and pouncing arms, and with the blood that oozes from his thighs, I will smear your hair." Thus Draupadi with her unwise words increased the enmity between Duryodhana and Bhima. The great Kurukshetra war took place. Thousands of soldiers were killed and the vows of the two great heroes were also fulfilled.

Sometimes on account of unwisdom even good doctrines are abused. The following amusing incident illustrates this point :

The Dasara celebrations were going on near a village. There was a well nearby. On account of the heavy rush of people there, one fell into the well. He did not know swimming. He somehow managed to keep his head above water. He cried out, "Please save me. I am drowning."

A mendicant came there. Hearing the man's cry, the mendicant said, "My dear man, in life sorrows are larger in number than joys. Hence, what is the use of my saving you? In your previous life (*Poorva janma*) you must have pushed somebody into a well and so in this life, you have fallen into the well. Every one must taste the fruit of his actions (*Karmas*). So, taste the fruit of your *Karma* peacefully. You will be freed from your *Karma* and you will attain *Nirvan*." After drinking some water, the mendicant went away.

Some time later, a leader came there. He was searching for an opportunity to deliver a lecture and to give

promises to his listeners. Here he found an opportunity. Addressing the man in the well, he said, "Be courageous and calm. Within a few days the Legislative Assembly will meet and I will place before the Assembly a resolution demanding that the government should build walls around wells in all the villages in India." The drowning man said, "I do not know when the resolution will be passed and when the walls will be built. Those walls at any rate will not save me from death." The leader said, "You are thinking of your own welfare. I have not come across a more selfish man than you. A true gentleman is he who thinks of the welfare of others. Only insects think of their own welfare. You are not an insect but a man." The drowning man said, "In that case, you be a true gentleman and help me to come out." The leader said, "I do not think of the welfare of one or two. I care for the welfare of all. 'Service to society is service to God' that is my motto. I think of the welfare of the common people and I always strive for their welfare." The drowning man said, "Let the welfare of the common people be achieved when it can be achieved but I am drowning and I am dying. Save me." The leader said, "The death or the welfare of a single individual is not at all important. Moreover if you die now, my task will be easy. I can tell the Assembly that a man died because of the government's neglect in not building walls around wells. Your example will add strength to my resolution and it will soon be passed and will become a law and you will become a martyr. This is a great opportunity for you. All the people of our country will garland your statue and will honour you. Even though you die, you will become immortal."

The man said, "I do not want to become immortal or famous. Kindly take me out and save my life."

But not caring to hear his words, the leader went away from there.

Next came a Christian father. On seeing him, the priest felt very happy. He put a rope into the well and the man came out climbing up with the help of the

rope. He said to the priest, "You have saved my life. You are really kind. I am extremely grateful to you." The priest said, "Kindness? Dear brother! I have not shown you any kindness. In fact, you have been kind to me. Falling into the well, you gave me an opportunity of rendering service to a fellow human being. Jesus Christ has said, 'Service to man is service to God'. Today, by taking you out of the well, I have done service to God. If you fall into the well again I shall have another opportunity of serving God." Saying this the priest pushed him into the well again. Again he helped him to come out. The man said, "What is this? You are killing me by pushing me into the well." Saying this, he ran away from there. Because they lack true knowledge and wisdom, people act according to the letter ignoring the spirit of their doctrines. They do not realise the real implication of the doctrines. When a man has no natural desire to help others, he cannot be said to be enlightened. "There is no wisdom or enlightenment in a man whose kindness or benevolence does not bring happiness to others."

Wisdom enables us to distinguish good from evil. We should use our wisdom, accept what is right and use it in practical life. A man who lacks wisdom does not do anything good. He merely imitates others. He follows others without thinking.

A certain *brāhmin* went to Benaras. One morning he wanted to perform the ablutions and he had in his hand a copper vessel containing the holy water of the Ganga sealed in it. He buried the vessel on the bank of the river and made a small *linga* out of sand over it so that he might recognise the place where he had buried the vessel. When he came back, some time later, he found a large number of *lingas* made out of sand on the river bank. Every one who came there thought that custom required a *linga* to be made and made a *linga* and went away. The *brāhmin* who could not find his vessel went away weeping over the loss of his vessel. This story illustrates how people imitate others, because they lack wisdom and sense.

20. THE PATH OF SALVATION

OH YOU PEOPLE DESIRING SALVATION!

If someone is running speedily and if you ask him, "Where are you running to?" and if the man says in reply to your question, "I do not know where I am going." You will naturally think that he is a mad fellow. But, are you not also mad and foolish because you are travelling through life without knowing the aim of life?

Those who travel without a destination or aim keep wandering endlessly without reaching any goal. If life is a journey, salvation is its destination. Every enlightened *jiva* always endeavours to reach that goal. That is the highest objective of every enlightened being.

Moksha or salvation is the aim of life. Salvation means freedom from all desires and passions and attachments. When a light is extinguished where does the flame go? Just as the flame disappears for ever and does not come back, the soul also after entering the state of salvation does not re-enter life and does not become bound in body again. We say, "He has attained *Nirvāna* like the flame of a light going out", and this state from where there is no return is the ideal state called *Moksha*.

A lofty ambition and the feeling of contentment are both acceptable and commendable but each of these two has its sphere. Contentment is essential in respect of worldly life while a lofty ambition is essential in one's spiritual life—the lofty ambition of attaining salvation is essential in respect of one's spiritual life. Our desires for worldly things are countless and endless. Therefore in this sphere, contentment is a virtue but ambition is commendable if it is entertained in respect of salvation. Hence in the spiritual life ambition is commendable and acceptable. Ambition ends after the attainment of *Moksha*. We should have that lofty ambition. We should always aim at attaining perfection. When shall I become

perfect? When shall I attain the status of *paramātmā*? When shall I be equal to *Paramātmā*? When can I attain endless, enduring, ineffable peace? When can I get out of this eternal cycle of birth, old age and death? When can I become all-knowing and all-seeing? When can I rise above passions and attachments, above victories and defeats, above commendation and condemnation and above the ever-changing mental propensities?

The desires underlying these questions lead man on the path of salvation, inspire him to pursue that path and impel him never to swerve from that path. The state of *Moksha* or salvation will not be far from you if you can realise the nature of your soul, if you have faith in the potentialities of your soul, if you carry out your activities with emotional and intellectual equanimity and if you acquire the qualities of simplicity, purity and sublimity of thought, emotion and action. As opposed to this felicity of salvation there is the perplexity of life that can madden you if you do not cultivate those virtues. If you are discontented with your worldly possessions, if you are entangled in the meshes of worldly desires, delusions, attachments, illusions, intellectual and emotional intoxications and love of luxury and if you die when you are thus entangled in those vices, your death will be but 'an advance booking of a seat' in a train which goes on travelling through the endless cycle of birth, old age and death. It is well said that one should become godly and worship god. "Become a god and worship a God." What is the inner meaning of this statement? The inner meaning of this statement is when we go to worship God or to pray to God, in temples, mosques, churches and Gurudwars, we should completely free ourselves from all desires and attachments of life and spiritually attain to a state of proximity to divinity.

It is said in the *Bhagavad Gītā*:

यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥

Yo yacchradhah sa eva sah.

"A man will be what he desires to be."

An English philosopher says, "Tell me what you desire to become and I will tell you what you will be-

come.” What Maharshi Vyāsa has said in the *Gītā* this English philosopher also says. The meaning of both the statements is that a man becomes what he wants to become and what he pursues with interest and concentration. If we have devotion for Vītraga step by step we too will attain that state of *vītarāgata* (a sublime and passionless state). Maharshi Umaswathi has stated in his immortal work *Tatvārthadhigama Sūtram*, the following *sūtra* first :

सम्यग्दर्शनज्ञानचारित्राणि मोक्षमार्गः ।

Samyagdarshanajnānacharitrāṇi mokshamārgah.

“Right faith, right knowledge and right conduct constitute the path of salvation.”

In other words, right thinking, right knowledge and right action enable us to attain salvation. A hero can attain victory over his enemies but *Mahāvīra* (the great spiritual hero) attains victory over internal enemies like pride, anger, delusion and desire. The man who fights against external enemies is a *Samśāri*, a man of the world but the man who fights against internal enemies and destroys them is *Arihanta*, the slayer of internal enemies. The man who conquers external enemies attains worldly prosperity (the goddess of wealth) but the man who fights against internal enemies like passions and desires attains spiritual wealth (*Mokshalakshmi*).

If we want to fight against external enemies we can take the help of others but when a man fights against his internal enemies, he has to carry out the fight alone and single-handed. That means a man can attain salvation only by means of his own spiritual and ethical endeavours.

The *Mahāmantra* (the holy hymn of invocation) demands absolute humility on the part of the votary. That is why the word *Namah* (नमः) precedes the name of every entity invoked in the *Māhamantra*, the great hymn.

Namo Arihantāṇam; Namō Siddhāṇam;

Namo Āyariyāṇam; Namō Uvajjhāyanam;

Namo loye savva sāhūnam.

Namo (Namah) means salute.

This is just as we say elsewhere, *Sri Ganeshāya Namaḥ, Haraye Namaḥ.*

Humility is the first and foremost virtue that is expected of a disciple. It is humility that makes a disciple fit to receive knowledge. (विनयाद्वादि पात्रताम्) Humility gives us fitness.

The great Jain Āchārya Haribhadra Soori considers humility as the very basis of the *Jina Shāsana* (The Jain *dharma*). He says, "Humility is the basis of the Jain *dharma*. Only a humble person can achieve self-discipline. How can there be *dharma* or *tapā* (religion and austerity) in the case of a man who is devoid of humility?"

According to a *Gāthā* (hymn) in the *Dashavaikālika Sūtra*, humility is the root of *dharma* and *moksha* is the fruit of *dharma*.

This world is like a rented house. This body is also a rented house. We have to leave this rented house and we have to change from house to house (from body to body). But *Moksha* or salvation is our permanent abode. Once you enter it, you need not leave it. You will be the absolute master of that house. He who has humility has the right faith also or the right vision. He who has the right vision acquires the right knowledge. He who has the right knowledge acts in the right manner. In such a man, wisdom abides and so he knows, what to accept and what to reject; what is despicable and what is commendable. This wisdom gives man the power of right action and that leads him to salvation. Just as a bird flies with its two wings the *jiva* (living being) can also fly over the ocean of *Samsāra* and reach the state of salvation with the help of the two wings of right knowledge and right action.

ज्ञानक्रियाभ्याम् मे क्षः ।

Jñānakriyābhyām mokshah.

"Salvation or *Moksha* is attained by means of right knowledge and right action."

If knowledge is like light, action is like the path or direction. If knowledge is lame, action by itself is blind. If a lame man sits on the shoulder of a blind man, they can reach their destination. Similarly, action (the blind

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man) guided by knowledge (the lame man) can take us towards salvation. The *Vaidik rishis* exhort :

चरैवेति चरैवेति

Charaiveti Charaiveti.

“Keep moving, keep moving.”

Mahatma Buddha exhorted, “Delusion brings death.” Lord Mahāvira exhorted, “Oh Gautam! Do not be careless even for a moment.” The essence of all these exhortations is that after we attain knowledge, we should without any demur, perform the right action. After we attain *Moksha* even *dharma* (religious duty) ends.

If a thorn sticks into our foot, we take it out with a pin. After the thorn is removed we have no use for the pin. Similarly, we need discourses, *shāstras* (Philosophical teachings), spiritual studies etc. as long as desires and passions dwell in our mind. After we discard all our passions and desires, we do not need discourses, spiritual studies etc.

यदा ते मोहकलिलं

बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति

तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदम्

श्रुतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥

—गीता

Yadā te mohakalilam

buddhirvyatitarishyati

Tadā gantāsi nirvedam

shrotavyasya shrutasyacha

—Gita

(After your intellect crosses the taint of illusion, you shall attain to indifference, regarding things heard and things yet to be heard.)

The Buddha said to his disciples, “I am preaching to you the *dharma* so that it may serve as a boat in which you can cross the ocean of *samsāra*.” You should use it to cross the ocean not to hold it and keep it with you. After crossing a river, we do not need the boat by which we crossed the river. We discard it. We do not carry it on our heads here and there. In the same manner, after we attain *moksha*, we do not need to perform religious austerities and so we discard them.

As long as we desire sensual and worldly pleasures we remain in *samāsra* (worldly life) and *moksha* is the freedom from those desires. The enlightened say that *samsāra* means the existence of desires in our hearts and *moksha* is their annihilation. *Moksha* is freedom from *Kashāyas* or delusions. “*Moksha* or salvation does not lie in *Digam-baratva* (one branch of Jainism), *Shvetāmbaratva* (the other branch of Jainism), logical reasoning, intellectual disputation or in the defence of one’s doctrines. Real salvation is freedom from *Kashāyas* (mental delusions). *Tapa* (spiritual austerity) comes after right vision, right knowledge and right action. It increases our spiritual glory.”

A certain gentleman was summoned to the court on the charge of having beaten somebody. The complainant said to the judge, “My Lord, this gentleman assaulted me. Do justice to me.” The judge said to the gentleman, “How fiercely did you beat him?” The gentleman went to the complainant and using all his strength beat him and said, “My Lord! Think that I beat him with one-fourth of this fierceness.” In this manner the gentleman beat the complainant in the bazaar once and again in the court so that he might not complain against him in future. Through the same action he also answered the judge’s question. So his action illustrates the proverb, ‘Shoot two birds with one arrow’. In the same manner *Tapas* or austerity helps us to achieve physical and spiritual welfare and also to destroy our *Karmas*.

We should perform *Tapas* with faith and enthusiasm otherwise it will be futile.

A certain gentleman opened a Cool drinks shop in Chowpāti in partnership with another merchant. The two partners invested money; each investing half the capital. They decided to divide between themselves the price of each glass of the sherbet. In consequence, each would get 50 paise and each could retain as his profit what remained after deducting the expenses. They sat in the shop for a long time. Not a single customer came. The first gentleman felt thirsty. He asked for one glass of the sherbet. The other replied, “This is a shop; you cannot get anything free.” The first gentleman had one

rupee with him. He gave it to his partner and drank one glass of sherbet. The partner gave him 50 ps. Some-time later the partner also felt thirsty. He too did the same thing. So, the first gentleman got back his 50 ps. In this manner, both went on drinking the sherbet and 50 paise kept moving from one partner to the other. By the evening, all the sherbet was over but the merchants got no profit. Whatever they had invested they had spent.

The gentleman returned home and told his wife, "There was good business but I got no profit." In the same manner, only those get benefit from *Tapas* who perform it with faith and enthusiasm. Only such people get salvation not others.

Droṇāchārya, the great master of archery placed a Pigeon made of flour on the branch of a tree and began testing the aim of his disciples. He asked every pupil of his what he saw. One said, "I see yourself and myself." Another said, "I see the tree and the sky." The third one said, "I see the branches and leaves of the tree." The fourth one said, "I see the flowers, fruits and the bird on the tree." But Arjuna said, "I see only the eye of the bird, and I see nothing else." Droṇāchārya was pleased by his reply and he commanded Arjuna to shoot his arrow at the bird and he shot his arrow, aiming it with dexterity, and surprised all the beholders, by shooting the bird. In the same manner a *sādhaka* (one who is trying to achieve *moksha*) should not see before him anything except his target, namely, **salvation**.

A barrister said to Rāmakrishna Paramahansa, "A doctor is treating you to cure you of your disease. Can't you cure it by means of your *yoga* (spiritual power)?" With a smile on his lips Rāmakrishna Paramahansa replied, "I am not a fool to pour *ghee* into ashes. I do not want to waste for the sake of this perishable body, the spiritual powers I have attained by years of spiritual endeavours." So, the *sādhakas* should realise that spiritual endeavours are made to attain spiritual welfare, to attain salvation not for the sake of the welfare of the body.

Chhāṇakya said, "O sire! If you desire salvation discard passions deeming them a dreadful poison." Passion is more dreadful than poison. It is said, "There is a

great difference between *Visha* (Poison) and *Vishaya* (passion). Poison kills us only if we drink it, but passion kills us even if we think of it.”

You keep the matchstick in the box as long as it has the power to produce fire. After that power is exhausted, it is freed from the box. In the same manner, as long as the mind has the quality of causing the fire of passion or desire, it is kept in the box of *samsāra*. Only when the mind is freed from that quality, does it get salvation.

Two scholars sat in a boat and set out from Mathura to Brindāvan on a moonlit light. They kept smoking *bhang* (an intoxicating leaf) and rowing the boat throughout the night but the next morning they found that they were near the city of Mathura. It happened so because they had not removed the anchor and released the boat in their mood of intoxication. In the same manner, as long as we do not release the mind from (the rope) the bondage of passions and desires we cannot reach the magnificent mansion of eternal felicity or *moksha* even if we continue to perform austerities through countless *janmas* (lives).

If you want to enter a palace, you have to obtain the permission of the door-keepers. In the *Yogavashishṭa* it is said that the mansion of *moksha* has four door-keepers. They are: (1) **Self-control**, (2) **Contemplation**, (3) **Contentment** and (4) **Noble Company**.

The man who rises above joys and sorrows becomes a *jivanmukta* (attains salvation even while living in this body). It is said in the *Yogavashishṭa* elsewhere, “He who is contented with what he gets and whose equanimity is not affected by joys and sorrows is a *jivanmukta* (one who attains salvation while living). He who becomes a *jivanmukta* like the Arihantdev can also help others to attain eternal freedom. After narrating an incident which illustrates this great truth, I will end my discourse. Thinking that by hearing the *Bhāgavata*, one can attain *brahmajñāna* (knowledge of the supreme reality) a certain king heard the *Bhāgavata* for a week read by a scholar but he did not attain *brahmajñāna*. Therefore, he was not willing to give any gift to the scholar and the two began to

quarrel with each other. The king accused the scholar saying that he had not explained the text properly. The *brāhmin* accused the King saying that the King had not heard the *Bhāgavata* with concentration and devotion. Fortunately, the divine sage Nārada came there just then. After finding out the cause of their quarrel, he took both of them into a garden. He tied each of them to a tree with a rope tightly and then said to them, "You release each other." Both of them confessed that they could not release each other because both were bound. Then Nārada gave them this exhortation, "*Brahmajñāna* is not an article, that can be sold and bought, it is a sacred one and it is a precious one. Just as one man who is bound to a tree cannot release another man who is also bound to a tree, a man who is bound by passions and desires to *Samsāra* cannot enlighten and release another man who is also bound by passions and desires. I caused you this discomfort of being tied to trees only to enable you to realize this great truth." Nārada released both of them and both expressed their heartfelt gratitude to him for having delivered them from bondage. A vital point in this story is that Nārada could deliver them because he was not bound.

Oh you people! Come! Let us endeavour to get rid of the bondage of *samsāra*. By praying to Lord Vitarāga thus, "Oh great Lord! You have attained deliverance and you can help others to attain deliverance. Being yourself free you can free others."

Thus glorifying Lord Vitarāgā let us act according to his precepts and attain *moksha*. The Lord said, "With the help of the light of knowledge, you should dispel the darkness of delusion, desire and passion. You can attain salvation by destroying your passions and desires. Salvation brings eternal, endless, ineffable felicity and there is no sorrow in that ideal state. There is only joy, the joy of the highest kind. There is only peace—peace of the highest kind. There is only felicity — the quality of which is sublimity.

Let us walk forward on the golden steps that leads to salvation. If your aim is to attain salvation, **you will attain it.**

ERRATA

Page	Line	Incorrect	Correct
19	20	through vessel	through the vessel of
50	35	moral spiritual	moral and spiritual
53	20	life	worldly life
64	26	preaching me	preaching to me
111	6	Upashraya	the Upashraya
118	19	suggested them	suggested to them
150	1	under	under an
150	2	under	under an
152	5	matter of with	matter with
184	22	of body	of the body
201	1	Parmatma	the Parmatma
201	2	Parmatma	the Parmatma



