

# Reflections

Pujya Chitrabhanuji







Pujya Shree Chitrabhanuji

*To open a window to the living reality  
is to experience beauty*

## REFLECTIONS

These reflections from the pen of Pujya Chitrabhanuji are for those who wish to pursue the path of moral regeneration—those who seek “proper discourse” and a conscience “fully awake”. This collection is for those who wish to ponder over the purpose and direction of their life. One recalls Bacon’s words that while some books are meant to be read to confute or contradict, others are read to be chewed and digested. This book belongs to the latter category.

This collection is not meant to be just a collection of witty sayings, aphoristic and quotable, adorning our coffee tables—but for those who need a guide to experience the ecstasy of “perfected consciousness.” The book is written by one who has cherished this prayer :

“May I always be there to show the path to the pathless wanderers of life.”

Pujya Chitrabhanuji has gained renown as a Jain thinker, as a man who combines scholarship with a rich experience of life. As a Jain teacher who spent his time in study, meditation and teaching, he realised the inadequacy of a cloistered life and decided to spread the ideas derived from his Jain masters and shaped and modified by his own experience and observation. He has travelled to many corners of the globe and disseminates his ideas through his books and meditation centres spread all over the world.

He was invited to speak in the Harvard Divinity School of Boston. The Jain ideals of compassion and reverence for life have been dear to him and his espousal of these ideals at such august assemblies as the

Second Spiritual Summit Conference at Geneva have struck a responsive chord in many people all over the world. It is not surprising that he is frequently invited to universities by scholars who are keen to have his inspiring presence and his thought-provoking words.

Pujya Chitrabhanuji has stressed the need to appreciate the sanctity of all life and the importance of promoting non-violence and world peace. He has not been content to merely teach, he has initiated all kinds of humanitarian activities—aiding social welfare projects, disaster relief work, animal shelters, and children's homes. The thoughts that follow in the book are not merely the product of a facile pen, but a flow from a mind that has been sensitive to human sufferings and aspirations and which has the ability to see vital and essential truths of life.

—*Editor*

## *Inner Harmony*

How much beauty is there in this world, which man is blinded to because of the fury of hate?

O the music of life ! If man could only hear it ! If only he could overcome the deafness that comes from the noise and cacophony of discord and resentment within !

## *Love and Forbearance*

Remember this much, my friends! The world never advances through controversy and cavil. Bitter and wearisome one must make one's existence thereby. If you would transform your world into a sweet and lovely thing, then expand the spirit of forbearance and love in your life.



## *Beauty*

Loveliness that must rely only on the appeal to external senses for its apprehension, is not beauty, but a shadow of desire and passion. Beauty, serene and immaculate, abides in the tranquil ecstasy of man's perfected consciousness — the consummate ecstasy that must be felt and visualized in the quietude of being !

## *Par Excellence*

Hard, indeed, is the job of trans-fusing the spirit of religion into the reality of everyday life ; but then, he alone is the man par excellence, who can inter-weave religion into the texture of everyday existence !

## *The Peak of Religion*

To reach the peak of religion, you will have to mount the steep stairs of self-restraint and compassion, of Ahimsa and human service. Then alone can the summit of religion be confidently scaled !

## *Opportunity*

Don't sit idle, awaiting an opportunity to descend upon you if you have faith and a vision to pursue. Opportunity cannot come your way so easily; you have to create an opportunity for yourself. Many a well-meaning person waiting for opportunities to descend upon him, has passed away, wailing and moaning from this world without performing a single significant act in all his career. Heroic souls are those who regard each moment of their life as an opportunity in itself.

## *Golden Means*

To quench the fire of wrath,  
seek the shelter of equanimity.  
To pierce the rock of conceit,  
enlist the aid of humility. To cut  
through the thicket of illusion,  
employ the arms of candour. To  
bridge the gulf of cupidity, invite  
the counsel of contentment !

## *Man versus Brute*

The cardinal difference between man and brute lies only in this: To act by compulsion under the fear of punishment is the hallmark of a brute, whereas to act under the uplifting urge for duty awareness self-ordained, is the primary characteristic of man.

### *Insular Propensity*

Be it a country or a race, be it an individual or a community, its decline irrevocably sets in from the moment it succumbs to an insular attitude of intolerance of others' views.

## *Tide of Time*

Would you not muse over this at daybreak every morning? How many hours do you while away each day in eating and sleeping, in bustle and business? And over against these, how many are spent in elevating thought, in ennobling action, in sincere prayer?



## *The World's Esteem*

The world is like Janus, the double-faced god. Having acclaimed you as benign this moment, it will dub you perverse, the next. Study your life whenever the world calls you either benign or perverse. After all, the verdict of one's conscience is far more valuable than the estimation of the whole world.

### *Essential Perspective*

Proper fellowship, proper discourse and a conscience fully awake are the three essentials needed every hour, every moment, to restrain the straying mind in its propensity to pursue the path of moral degeneration. This primary truth the self-devoted votary must ever keep in mind.

## *Aspiration*

Aspiration liberated from its mundane impulse, while one with the noblest urge of the human spirit, can assuredly lead man along the highroad of progress and self-development in life.

## *Happiness*

Happiness is like a contrary creature. She rushes headlong towards those who never make a call upon her, whereas she would recoil farther and farther from one who woos her ardently !

### *Penury versus Affluence*

Is your mind penurious or rich? If you feel distressed by the sight of happiness in others, your mind is undoubtedly penurious, even though you may be materially rich. But, on the other hand, if you feel gratified by the sight of affluence in others, rich indeed is your mind notwithstanding the penury conditioning your material existence.

## *Web of Illusion*

Man! O man! Remember that attachment is like an illusory web. It looks so lovely, but perilous is it in reality! How easy to weave it, but how difficult to unravel it! The spider weaves a web around him, but he cannot afterwards disentangle himself therefrom. The more he strives to step out of his self-woven web, the more he gets entangled in its meshes. Beware, therefore, thou, too, art not caught as well in thine self-engendered web of illusion.

## *Self-Improvement*

Until a sense of refinement has permeated your being, your life, your demeanour, it cannot be transmitted outright into the souls of your tender little children. One who desires to improve his children, must first improve himself.

## *Reformer*

Move on to rescue somebody only after you have mastered the art of swimming, otherwise not only will you drown, but you will drown the hapless person too. Likewise, before you launch out to reform others, first reform yourself; otherwise you will pollute not only yourself; you will vitiate others as well.



## *Valour*

There is no valour in crushing the weak through brutal force; sheer violence it is, directed by blind passion. Valour abides in these two things: in confessing with candour the lapse committed by one's self; and in bearing with a manly heart whatever consequences might stem from the lapse once committed.

*Alas!*

My friends! Never utter that abject word—alas! If anything really impedes your higher progression, it is nothing but the utterance of this lowly word. Bogged up in the deep swamp of dismay, a man can never attain the lofty peak of glory. To bewail of life bygone is like dashing one's head over a deceased friend. Remember this: the sun of happiness keeps ever hidden behind the bleak clouds of disaster!

### *Implicit Worth*

My friends, if you are already exuding the perfume of virtue from your inner being, you need not entreat the opinion of others about its sweetness. The very fragrance of your being will make them appreciate your worth. Do the blossoms ever beseech the honey-bees to extol their perfume?

*All that is Good is Mine*

All that is old is good, all that is new is bad. This ideology is the outcome of an insular attitude. And similarly all that is new is splendid, all that is old is rotten—this mentality is a product of superficial apprehension! The ideology that must develop as a result of vast reading and deep thinking would move along some such lines : Of the two, whichever is good, is mine !

## *Sanctity*

Just as an elephant untamed struggles against its chain with uneasiness and would run off to the woods, even so, a sage untamed cannot long endure the strain of sanctity and seeks an escape into the wild thickets of self-deception.

### *Flow of Experience*

Far more valuable are common precepts forged on the anvil of experience than epic sagas which are the products of phantasy !

## *Probe Within*

O Man ! Whom are you seeking for, without ? Step in. He whom you are condemning as the spectre of sin and are eschewing as such, sits hidden within the left-hand cabin of your temple-shrine ; whereas he whom you are adoring as the soul of beneficence and whose intimacy you are longing for, lies asleep within the right-hand chamber of your inner shrine. Let the latent power of love rise from its dormant state !

## *Great*

One who appreciates benevolence somebody had rendered unto him is a noble being. But immensely noble is he who renders benevolence to a person unknown. But against them both, one who showers benevolence over a person who has only done him an evil turn, is immeasurably great !



## *Spectre of Seclusion*

Yes! Yes! Now I have learnt why you are afraid of seclusion. For, it is in seclusion that you recall your misgivings about your self and tremble at their recollection. So, in order to forget them you mix with the bustle and bang your drums on worthless counts.

Pretty is this way, pretty, indeed, for you to block the voice of your conscience !

### *Filth and Water*

Consider only this much when a good person feels like competing with a vicious mind :

Who will be the loser if there is a brush between filth and water ? Only the water ! What has filth to lose ? Can filth ever be refined ? The lucid water will have only to lose in that situation !

## *Will-Power*

This is but a belief of fools:  
Someone shall secure my entry  
across the door of freedom  
through his tremendous, extra-  
ordinary capacity or else, by  
way of some supernatural  
miracle !

Remember these words, if you  
are genuinely aspiring to attain  
freedom:

No one in the world is capable  
of ensuring freedom for you,  
until and unless a mighty will-  
power has flashed forth from  
your own being to attain to  
freedom !

### *Within: Without*

When the mind is light, resonant with harmony, fully developed, joy swells within, even though there might range the anguish of hell without: But if the mind is heavy, gruesome and self-circumscribed, the heart feels oppressed within, with the agony of hell, even though there might be paradise prevailing without.

## *Recklessness*

The traffic light does not hinder the motorist. It ensures the freedom to drive without accidents. The man who jumps the red lights of his life can only bring himself and others to grief.

### *Fulfillment*

The river-self ultimately becomes the ocean-self. The bank disciplines its surge, ensures its flow and prevents its dissipation.

Published by Divine Knowledge Society,  
E-1, Queen's View, Walkeshwar Road, Bombay 400 006.  
Printed at Vakil & Sons Ltd., Bombay 400 038. India.

