

2

Volume

2018

No. 2

॥ श्री स्वामिनारायणो विजयतेतराम् ॥



sahaj  
ANAND

The Eternal Bliss



# CONTENT

No.	Subject	Author
1	Prelude	H.H. Acharya Shri Rakeshprasadji Maharaj
2	Ras Darshan	Prof. Madhusudan Vyas
4	Shikshapatri	Shantikumar Bhatt
6	Get Motivated	
7	The First	Harendra P. Bhatt
9	Rock-like Refuge	Sadhu Purnavallabhdasji
10	Charanarvind Dhyam	Lalji Bhagat
12	The Purpose	Swami Bhanuprakashdasji
13	Inspiration	
14	Children's World	Jnan Baug - Vadtal
17	Evedom	Prof. Dyuti Yajnik
20	Health & Spirituality	Vaidyaraj Harinath Jha
21	Milestones	Purshottambhai Kacha
23	What's & Whys	Lalji Bhagat
24	Aim for श्री only	Harendra P. Bhatt
	Prasadi	Shantikumar Bhatt

Published by

**Shri Swaminarayan Temple, Vadtal Sansthan**

Ta. Nadiad, Dist. Kheda, Gujarat, INDIA - 387 375.

Phone : +91 268 - 2589728, 776

E-mail : vadtaldhamvikas@gmail.com

Web Site : www.vadtalmandir.org



## INSPIRATION

H. H. Acharya Shri  
Rakesh Prasadji Maharaj  
Vadtal Diocese

## SAHAJ ANAND

A quarterly published  
Periodical

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

India Rs. : 150/-  
Abroad Rs. : 600/-

## OWNER

Vadtal Temple  
Managing Trustee Board,  
Vadtal

## PUBLISHER

Chief Executive Kothari Shastri  
Shri Ghanshyamprakashdasji

## MANAGING EDITOR

Shastri Swami  
Dr. Santvallabhdasji

## EDITORS

Parshad Lalji Bhagat  
Shri Harendra P. Bhatt

## DESIGN & CONCEPT

Hari Smruti  
Jnan Baug, Vadtal



# PRELUDE

H. H. Acharya Shri  
Rakeshprasadji Maharaj



We welcomed and blessed the first issue of Sahaj Anand - the periodical answers the call of this generation's need. In this second issue and from now onwards we intend to have an intellectual interaction about the true principles propounded by Bhagwan Swaminarayan in our Holy Fellowship. Bhagwan Swaminarayan established the Holy Fellowship aiming for Kalyan - the ultimate good of every soul. For such a noble deed He established a unique tradition, which is very well explained in Shikshapatri, Vachnamrut, Satsangijivan - the authentic holy scriptures of our Holy Fellowship. We must follow this path, as this is a six-fold Fellowship. Each fold is unique and it is interdependent on one another which create divine atmosphere.

Our youth should follow this path. While going wholeheartedly for their career, they should spare some time for this real way of Bhakti. Shreeji Maharaj had formed this solid boundary for Moksha which is unbreakable. Anyone can poach a boundariless farm. So Shreeji Maharaj gave precise rules to follow. His Lordship also promised to protect those who followed Him rightly. The main point is of Swa-Kalyan. We have to worship Shreeji Maharaj to attain his grace. While doing so, we don't have to worry about the world. The worldly pleasures prevent us from worship. They are hurdles. Only worship and true worship to Shri Hari leads to Kalyan. Shriji Maharaj has opined that "One must understand this today or after one lakh years but one have to understand it." We believe the young generation is honest, hard working and committed and able to understand the real message. We fully believe this young generation will surely follow the path shown by Shreeji Maharaj and will attain its glory. We fully believe Shreeji Maharaj will bestow them a glimpse of His divine experience. With this hope, our Jay Shree Swaminarayan to all!



## RAS DARSHAN

*Pichakari liye haath me...*



The holy land of Jnan Baug, Vadatal : where Shree Hari had celebrated the Holi Festival !

This devotional lyric written by Shree Premanand Swami presents a living picture of foppy and blithesome festival of colour displayed by Shree Hari during the celebrations of holi festivals among

**Pichakari liye haath me, Rung bhinji rahe hai;  
Chhirakat muni per rung, Bhakti Dharma soot Shree Hari,  
Fant bhari hai gulaal ki, Darat at-hi umang.  
Divyaroop Prabhu aap hai, Divya Chandan dhare ang;  
Khelat hai anuraag so, Divya purush ke sung.  
Chhaye vimaan akash me, Dekhat Soor Shashi Bhan,  
Gavahi pushpa vadhavahi, Nachat torat taan.  
Nirakhi chaabi Sahajanand ki, Prafullit Soor Muni vrund;  
Chitavat harat Santaap ko, Bali jaay Premanand.**

First he pushes the knob of the syringe and throws the inaugural spray of colour on the Munis and Saints who receive it with affectionate delight.

They feel sated, saturated, blessed

the saints and devotees at the holy land of Jnan Baug Vadatal. The entire atmosphere is shared with thrilling sensations. Earthen pots and other pots of brass and copper are filled with liquid colours. The players have divided themselves into groups of saints and devotees. All are waiting "how and when" Shree Hari will start the festival and start the divine play. All are curious and anxious but their waiting comes to end as Shree Hari comes forward holding his golden syringe in hand.

and obliged. A unique devotional rapture pervades all around. Apart from pots many cloth bags are also filled with colour powders. Members of the group take handfuls of colour powder and throw it on each other. Clouds of puffing powder of many colours are raised high up to the sky.

Everyone can see that on this special festival Shree Hari prefers to wear white vestment and he is also wearing a garland of white flowers in his neck. The figure of Shree Hari wearing lotus-

One who has the constant Darshan of the Moorti of God in the heart should also keep up the memories of those places of divine sports of God. Because at the time of death it may so happen that the Moorti of God may be forgotten. Even then, if one happens to remember such places, one may through such an association remember the Moorti of God and then the self may achieve divine bliss !

(Vachanamrut, Gadhada - F. 3)



white garment and flowers looks majestic and magnetic amidst the assembly of senior and superior Munis and Saints. He celebrates the Holi Festival with superior Munis and Saints. In fact this group playing colour festival on the earth is a mixture of the worldly and the divine beings. There is a special attraction for the mixture of the material and the spiritual elements. Even the deities and other celestial figures feel anxious to see the divine sport celebrated between the heavenly and the earthly beings. One by one they take respective planes and assemble up in the sky to watch the celebration. For this reason, the sky looks filled with the groups of celestial planes. Even deities like Indra, the moon and the sun have rushed there to see this rare and divine scene! This group of divine people looking from the sky feels so much thrilled by watching the sport that they begin to sing and throw flowers on Shree Hari. Some of them begin to dance on the rhythm of the music being played as a part of celebration of colour festival. The groups of deities, Munis, saints and devotees join the celebration and share the thrilling experience of the same. The entire scene, covering the heaven and the earth is vibrating with a mixed feelings of earthly and heavenly sensations. These vibrations enter the minds of the people who watch or hear about the divine sport. And they will remove all their mental and physical troubles. For this reason great musician and devotional poet Premanand Swami feels overwhelmed, satiated and blessed by the son of Bhakti and Dharma. This devotional lyric is a gem of Swaminarayan literature. Reading, understanding or listening to it is like taking a bath in a divine lake. When we read the lyric line by line, word by word we get some reflection of the experience shared by the Munis and devotees in the divine presence of Shree Hari.

- Prof. Madhusudan A. Vyas, Vadodara

## WELCOME TO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY !

Our Phones - Wireless

Cooking - Fireless

Cars - Keyless

Food - Fatless

Tyres - Tubeless

Tools - Cordless

Dress - Sleeveless

Youth - Jobless

Leaders - Shameless

Relationships - Meaningless

Attitude - Careless

Wives - Fearless

Babies - Fatherless

Feelings - Heartless

Education - Valueless

Children - Mannerless

PARLIAMENT - CLUELESS

MASSES - HELPLESS

Everything is becoming LESS but still our hope in God is - Endless.

In fact I am Speechless because Salvation remains Priceless !!

If you don't share this, you are faithless.





# SHIKSHAPATRI

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE DIVINE



Shantikumar Bhatt

I, Sahajanand Swami, write this Shikshapatri - Gospel of Life Divine - from Vadtal to all My followers residing in various regions (of the country and the world).

- Bhagwan Swaminarayan  
(Shikshapatri V. 2)

## Q.1 Who wrote Shikshapatri?

A.1 There are some critics who assert that Shree Sahajanand Swami wrote Shikshapatri in Gujarati and it was translated into Sanskrit verses by Shatanand Muni or Dinanath Bhatt. There is no truth in such a statement because no such Gujarati copy (written by Him) is found among all the manuscripts preserved carefully. Besides, Shree Hari was well-versed in Sanskrit. Nityanand Swami wrote Gujarati commentary on Sanskrit Shikshapatri. Within a few days Muktanand Swami, Brahmanand Swami and Premanand Swami translated the same into Hindi and Nishkulanand Swami translated it into Gujarati. None of them has stated that Shree Hari wrote Shikshapatri in Gujarati. Muktanand Swami, Mr. Thomas William - Secretary to the then Governor of Bombay and Shatanand Muni - the composer of Satsangi Jivan, clearly mention that Shree Hari wrote Shikshapatri in Sanskrit verses. Here Shree Hari declares, 'I write.' So none should doubt that anyone but Shree Hari Him self wrote Shikshapatri.

Q.2 Bhagwan Shree Swaminarayan was known by many names. Why is His

name 'Sahajanand' used in this verse?

A.2 'Sahaj' means inborn, natural, innate or natural state of disposition (Sanskrit dictionary : Vaman Shivram Apte) and 'Anand' i.e. A-means to the last, 'nand' means bliss. So Sahajanand means 'Whose bliss is everlasting or eternal'. As God Himself He needed no spiritual practices or artificial means to get such delight. So Sahajanand means: One whose bliss was inborn. Again, Sahaj means born with him i.e. the saints. The saints were contemporaneous. He Who bestows bliss spontaneously is called Sahajanand. His bliss being His natural state of disposition He needed no mundane object to give Him bliss. This points to His inborn superconscious state.

## Q.3 What is the meaning of Swami?

A.3 Swami means the Lord (proprietor) of the whole creation, the Supreme Sovereign of the whole creation, a spiritual preceptor, a religious man of the highest order. It is most appropriately applied here to Shree Hari. When applied to an ordinary saint (as an adjective, not noun) then it shows his aspiration towards the divine. The word Swami does not mean a particular saint as misunderstood and misinterpreted by so called scholars.

## Q.4 What is the significance of 'all who have taken shelter under Him'?

A.4 Shikshapatri is not meant only for the initiated followers. 'Nija' means His own (Ni: + ja). It is meant for all who surrender to God, i.e. for any person of any class, colour or creed. The world is also the most dangerous place, as the road to hell starts from here and temptation (Satan) allures all here. So one should surrender to God.



**Q.5 What is the meaning of 'living in various regions'?**

**A.5** This means this Gospel of divine life is meant for all those living in India and also abroad.

**Q.6 Why is this Gospel of the divine life called Shikshapatri?**

**A.6** 'Shiksha' means instructions given for the good of a person and 'Patri' means the instrument (sheet of parchment, talapatra - material for writing) that takes the message to all the places. Shikshapatri can also mean a collection of sheets (in form of verses).

**Q.7 Why did Shree Hari use the word 'staying in Vrittalaya'?**

**A.7** Shree Hari used to move from place to place. So he wants to specify the name of the town where He wrote Shikshapatri. Again Vrittalaya means the place where all news reached because devotees from various places brought news there. Again the greatest news that Shikshapatri was written here also spread from this place. So it is called Vrittalaya. The original word is VADTAL - VARTAL which means a place with beautiful lakes. The place was famous for gigantic banyan trees as well. Vata-Vada means a banyan tree.



Harendra P. Bhatt

**Shree Swaminarayan**  
- Manilal Parekh

Swami Sahajanand began His ministry with an energy which was nothing sort of tremendous. All accounts give testimony to this. Speed, energy, urgency, these were the characteristics of His work all through His ministry. He was possessed with a divine power which would not let him rest, nor would he let others rest. As one reads the manifold record of his life, one feels that one of the most spiritually dynamic personalities of history had been let loose on earth, and that this personality left its deep impress on the lives of tens of thousands of people in His own time and since.

Shree Swaminarayan, p. 39

No matter how many times the teeth bite the tongue,  
they still stay together in one mouth  
That's the spirit of FORGIVENESS. Even though the eyes  
don't see each other, they see things together,  
blink simultaneously and cry together. That's UNITY."

May God grant us all the spirit of forgiveness and togetherness.





DON'T QUIT

**GET MOTIVATED!**

## A GLASS JAR A story with significance

“A glass jar and two cups of tea”

When one aspires to do everything at fast pace and together in life; when one desires to achieve everything quickly and feels that even 24 hours in a day are less, then this story “A glass jar and two cups of tea” should be remembered.

A professor of philosophy came to class and told his students that he is going to teach them a very important lesson today!

He had brought along a big glass jar with him, which he placed on the table, started filling it with table tennis balls and till there was no place left to fill any more balls inside it, he kept on filling it! Then he asked the students, “Is this jar full?” He heard the reply in chorus, “Yes!”

Then the professor started filling it with small pebbles, he kept on shaking the bottle to fill in more pebbles, as many as he could, and wherever there was empty space left, the pebbles nicely fitted in there. The professor asked again, “Is the jar full now?” Students again said “Yes” in unison.

Now the professor started filling the jar with sand; the same phenomenon was repeated; whenever there was empty space, the sand filled in at all those places. Seeing this, students started laughing at their earlier two replies. Again, the professor asked, “Why? Isn’t this jar full now?” The students replied unanimously, “Yes...now it’s totally full!”

The professor then took out two cups filled with tea from under the table, and surprisingly even tea got mixed in the sand. Students were dumbstruck seeing this!

Now the professor started explaining in a serious tone...

“Imagine this glass jar to be your life...”

Table tennis balls symbolize the most important aspects of your life i.e. Lord, family, parents, kids, friends and health!

Small pebbles are symbolic of your job, occupation, car, big house, hobbies etc.

And sand means small futile talks, difference of opinions and fights!

If you had filled the jar first with sand, then there wouldn’t have been any place left to fill it with table tennis balls and pebbles. And if you had filled it with pebbles, there wouldn’t have been any place left for balls, but sand you could surely fill in!

This is what implies in our life...

If you stay engrossed in petty talks and worthless difference of opinions or fights and spend all your energies in such negativities, then you will not get any time to fulfill your big ambitions, necessary things for a living or attainable things that you most desire.

What gives you inner peace and happiness is up to you to decide. You should worry about the table tennis ball, which is most important. First decide what is important. Everything else is sand!

Students were listening to him in rapt attention. Then suddenly one of them asked, “But Sir, you did not tell us what do the two cups of tea stand for?”

The professor smiled and said, “That is what I was wondering that why didn’t anyone ask me this until now?”

The answer to it is - We might find our life most complete, fulfilling and satisfying, but we must at any given time always keep space to have “Two cups of tea with our best friend”

## theFIRST



**Harendra P. Bhatt**

Whatever happened for the first time during the lifetime of Lord Shree Swaminarayan or Swaminarayan Holy Fellowship is mentioned in "the First" series. Topics covered in this series are of two types: one, related to Lord Shree Swaminarayan and second, related to Swaminarayan Holy Fellowship. Yet, everything is centred around Lord Shree Swaminarayan. The topics, having religious as well as sociological impact, are historical milestones of the Swaminarayan Holy Fellowship. Like them, this is also the first attempt of the author.

### 6. Shakotsav at Loya V.S. 1877 (AD 1821) :

The exposition of culinary expertise on grand scale by Lord Sahajanand Swami.

Sahajanand Swami visited Loya in the Kartik Month of VS 1877 at the invitation of Shantaba and Sura Khachar, the first family of Loya. At Kariani, Sahajanand Swami declared to celebrate Shakotsav and Vasant Panchmi utsav at Loya and asked all saints and devotees to reach there on time. So, saints and devotees reached Loya in large numbers.

Sahjanand Swami and His retinue were received at the outskirts of Loya by Sura Khachar, his family members, leading villagers, satsangis and sants. Sahajanand Swami, all leading saints, were taken into a grand procession and the people of Loya and surrounding villages received them by showering flowers and singings Kirtans. With the arrival of Sahajanand Swami at the Darbargadh of Sura Khachar, the welcome procession ended. Sahajanand Swami was lodged at the Darbargadh of Sura Khachar and the leading saints and devotees were given due accommodation facilities.

On the 9th day of Kartik vad, V.S. 1877, Santaba's son Natha Khachar and nephew Manasiya Khachar requested Sahajanand Swami to start the Shakotsav Samaiyo using the Brinjals of their farms. Sahajanand Swami gladly obliged them.

On that day Sahajanand Swami used 240kg. ghee, 1400kg. brinjals and necessary spices to

make Shak. During 82 days of Shakotsav here, Sahajanand Swami made such Shak many times. Satsangis from many towns and villages took the opportunity of sponsoring this Seva. Sahajanand Swami celebrated shakotsav again in 1879.

### 7. The first four Sadgurus appointed by Lord Shri Sahajanand Swami.

It was V.S. 1875 (AD 1819) Sahajanand Swami was residing at Aadraj in North Gujarat. Ratu Khant, the ruler of Aadraj Village, and all his tribesmen were on their feet to serve Sahajanand Swami. They all had become vartmandhari followers and that had changed their life-style. Sahajanand Swami had come to grace and bless the Annakout Samaiya.

Here, one day Sahajanand Swami appointed four saints - Muktanand Swami, Nityanand Swami, Brahmanand Swami and Chaitanyanand Swami as Sadgurus. Sahajanand Swami made them sit on a dais, garlanded them, performed aarti before them and instructed all to obey them. Sahajanand Swami also appointed 8 more saints as co-sadgurus. Sahajanand Swami also performed puja of these eight saints.

Earlier, Sahajanand Swami had asked Aanandanand Swami, the former ruler of Bharatpur state, to look after the management of the saints, who were more than 2,000 at that time. All obeyed Sahajanand Swami but sometimes disobeyed Aanandanand Swami. The former king Aanandanand Swami could not tolerate this indiscipline; so one day, he requested



Sahajanand Swami to relieve him from that duty. Sahajanand Swami merely laughed at his request and promised to do something in future. One day, in an assembly, as a result of the divine power of Sahajanand Swami, Anandanand Swami saw the real form of all the saints and realized their glory. Sahajanand Swami informed Anandanand Swami that the real glory of those saints was shadowed by him and that is why they had become obedient; if they realized their true nature they would not obey anybody. Anandanand Swami accepted that fact and thanked Sahajanand Swami for providing him a chance to serve those great souls and again requested him to relieve him from that duty. Sahajanand Swami, to relieve Anandanand Swami, appointed the first four Sadgurus at Aadraaj.

#### 8. Yamdand : the first book of Nishkulanand Swami and Swaminarayan Sampradaya.

Nishkulanand Swami wrote Yamdand granth in 1804 A.D. at Adhoi in Kutch. Shreeji Maharaj asked him to write Yamdand in the format of Garud Puran. Written in simple Gujarati the poem promises the reader that Shreeji Maharaj is an incarnation and would relieve him from the punishment of the Yam, the God of death. Raymond Brady Williams opines that the document (the Yam-dand) is important for the religion, because it gives the first evidence of the revering of Sahajanand Swami as a manifestation of God. Manilal C. Parekh observed that 'the most remarkable features of this movement is the positive assurance of Victory over death and a very experience on the part of followers at time of death of being taken to Heaven by their master (Shreeji Maharaj). The earliest account of this is found in this book. Yam-Dand is also the last Pothe book (a hand written book with pictures) of Gujarat.

#### 9. Jivuba: the first Samkhya Yogi Bai.

Jivuba, the oldest daughter of Abhal Khachar and a sister of Dada Khachar, is believed to be the first Samkhya Yogi Bai of the Swaminarayan Sampradaya. She was married to Hathiya Patgar,

the son of Raiba Patgar of Kundal but with the permission of her in-laws she renounced the married life and returned to her father's house. She followed the Samkhya Yog and worshipped the pragat Parmatma, Sahajanand Swami.

Jivuba, also referred to as 'Moteri Bai' (the senior ones) in the scriptures of the Holy Fellowship, first practiced and then preached among the female disciples, and so became a role model for all. Till the appointment of the first Gadiwalashri (the wife of an Acharya), Jivuba performed the duties of a formal preacher. There were others also.

Jivuba, also known as 'Motiba', served Sahjanand Swami selflessly. Appreciating her devotion, Sahjanand Swami once gifted her an idol of Vasudev Narayan which she kept and worshipped in her ordo (quarter), so that Ordo later on came to be known as Vasudev Narayano Ordo.

Jivuba's last contributory work was to install the image of Shree Harekrishna Maharaj in Goponathji Temple at Gadhada. Acharyashri Raghuvеerji Mahrahshri of Vadtal Diocese performed the consecration rite on Fagun Vad 5, V.S. 1916. On Jeth Sud 5, V.S. 1916 (1860 AD) Jivuba left this mortal world. An otto (memorial) is made at the sight of her cremation at Laxmibag, Gadhada.

(Contd.)



*Blessed be sacred devotee Jivubai,  
whose mind followed all ascetic principles,  
who was an embodiment of  
penance and asceticism.  
Her life began to change from the day  
on which she happened to  
meet Swami Sahajanand,  
the treasure of happiness.*

*From that day she began to worship God,  
after avoiding all material pleasures.*

*- Nishkulanand Swami -*



Muktanand Swami asked, "The scriptures have described innumerable spiritual endeavors to please God; but amongst them all, which one is so powerful that it alone earns as much pleasure of God as is earned by performing all spiritual endeavors combined?"

Then Shriji Maharaj said, "Accepting the firm refuge of God is the single, greatest endeavor amongst all spiritual endeavours for pleasing God. That refuge, though, must be extremely firm and without any flaws."

The flow means here is alternative other than God. Gita said, तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत "Oh Arjun! Take shelter of only Him with all ecstasy that which we sing every day in prayer. त्वमेव माता च पिता त्वमेव, त्वमेव बन्धुश्च सखा त्वमेव । त्वमेव विद्या द्रविणं त्वमेव, त्वमेव सर्वं मम देव देव ॥ Oh God! Only you are our parents, you are our brothers, friends, our knowledge and wealth. You are each and everything of us. Vachanamrit focuses, "That refuge, though, must be firm and without any alternative." Means that shelter must be unshakable. On the path of salvation finding shelter other than God called a great drawback. So the devotees of God should be careful to not allowing that drawback in their life.

Moreover all take the shelter of God, but it's rare to find someone who takes refuge of God without exception. The independent God cannot be attained unless one becomes solely depended on Him. God always protects such unadulterated sheltered devotees. God makes such devotees fearless. While the whole world is under the holds of fear, the devotees stay confident and fearless.

Also the story of Mahabharat teaches us the

lesson of this. The very difference between only shelter and unadulterated shelter might be clear with this. We should choose the way after deliberate examination.

## Rock-like Refuge to God

The Pandavas (five sons of great king Pandu) lost their wife Draupadi in gambling. Duryodhan being egoistic disregarding the assembly, ordered Dushashan to bring Draupadi forcibly,

ordered to disrobe her in order to humiliate Pandava's honour. There were great persons sitting in the assembly and her unconquerable husbands and the great grandsire Bhishma, who was blessed with wish-long life, many victorious personalities were present in the assembly. Moreover majority were the devotees of God. Draupadi requested crying aloud to protect herself by taking their names individually. But all were subjugated by some or other reasons. All present in the assembly were not ordinary people. Even Dharmaraj (the god of death, Yudhisthir) himself, Nar (Arjun) the brother of Narayan could not offer any help to her. Though, Draupadi was devotee of Lord Shri Krishna, God did not seem to help her. None the less, she knew that there was no one to protect her except for Lord Krishna, She prayed, हे कृष्ण द्वारिकावासिन्... Lord Shri Krishna appeared when the other bonds of hope and shelter were broken.

Such firm shelter is like a ship to board this ocean of the world. As long one keeps faith in oneself or in others God doesn't come to help.

This story is indeed inspirable.

The God's rules are different from this world. So God always cares for his devotees.

- Sadhu Purnavallabhdasji





## CHARNARVIND DHYAN

Lalji Bhagat, Jnan Baug, Vadtal

If someone contemplates His feet with sacred marks, and worships Him with hearty affection; offers leaves and flowers with pure, firm mind; the divine radiance will spread in his heart and get supreme bliss. Such is the power of Feet-worship! Thus told Shri Hari Himself.

- Nishkulanand Swami

### Lotus-Feet of Bhagwan Swaminarayan

Samudrik Shastra is a branch of astrology which tells us about various marks and figures on the human body as they are useful in predicting the nature and character of a person. There are some such characteristic marks and figures which are found only on the body of God in human form or an incarnation in human form. Some of these marks and figures are found on the body of a great man also.

Lord Swaminarayan had 16 distinct divine marks : nine on right foot and seven on left foot. His footprints also show some of them clearly. These sixteen marks are a sure sign of His Godhood.

The positions and characters of various such marks on Lord Swaminarayan's Lotus-like footprints are poetically depicted by Nishkulanand Swami.

After Lord Swaminarayan breathed His last, His gross body was cremated at Laxmi Baug in Gadhada. In memory of our Lord a temple has been constructed at that place and footprints of our Lord, which were carved on black stone by Nishkulanand Swami have been installed there.

Here the meaning of each of 16 foot marks are given as below :



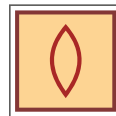
Saints appreciate **Swastik** (sacred cross), a clear mark appearing on the right foot-sole, which is a source of total welfare.



By watching the **Ashtakon** - octagon, crores of pains are destroyed; the Kaal (death) cannot kick, and pleasure overflows the heart.



**Ketu** stands for the saint, as flag's movement is controlled by wind; great saints also act, as per order of the Master (God).



The persons who contemplate on **Juv**-mark, any pain or misery does not touch them. Their brain gets happiness, and heart gets limitless pleasure.



**Ankush** - as anlius controls a reckless and errand elephant, the anlius-mark on Shri Hari's foot; controls and directs the devotee's mind to the shelter of the Master.



If you have once tasted the **Jamun** fruit, it contains the essence of all the tastes. So great that it destroys the desire for all other tastes; and the world seems quite tasteless.



Those who watch **Vajra**-mark become fearless. The fear of Kaal (death) and Karma, removed from the heart.



As water cannot stick to lotus, a saint can never be polluted in this world. Due to the contemplation on the **Padma** - lotus, evil effects of worldly matters cannot pervade him.



**Trikon** - the mark of triangle adores the left foot, contemplating on it three kinds of miseries; born out of Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, can be destroyed, which can benefit the seeker.



The absolutely conscious saints, remain detached from all worldly matters; like **Meen** - a fish that lives a wandering life, fluttering in water.



**Chandra** - Moon makes things cool, being its basic quality, Does not cause burning, in the heart that remembers it.



People contemplate on **Gopada** because, there are such qualities in it; which can give the scope to cross immediately, this boundless ocean of worldly life.



Shri Hari gets pleased on him, who contemplate on **Dhanush** the bow-mark; as it destroys the polluting effect of lust, anger, ego and greed.



Devotees who watch the mark of **Vyom**, are not detained in their path; because limitlessness is, the attribute of the space (Akash).



How can I describe **Kalash** ? It always stays on top; If you hold it in heart, nothing remains to be done!



As I watch both feet, I'm filled with pleasure, Nishkulanand covets, the **Urdhvarekha** - two rising lines.

*Ahstang Yoga is a wholesome tool with limitless modes,  
To contemplate Feet of Shri Hari, is the advice for all.  
By coveting the Feet of Shri Hari, sensible seeker can get boundless happiness.  
After leaving the body, doubtlessly attains Brahman-hood.*

**(Premanand Swami)**





## The Purpose

Shastri Swami Shri Bhanuprakashdasji  
(Porbandar)

Lord Shri Krishna has used the word “Eternally United” (Nityayukt) in Bhagavad Gita for people who contemplate only on God, not in other matter and in order to become eternally united or to worship God with devotion, three essential things require i.e. concentration, continuous dedication and submissiveness. Thousands of followers of Lord Swaminarayan worship Him with complete devotion. Worship with devotion means to remain connected with God by soul and body. To attain this condition is the real attainment. To sustain divine attainment in real sense is much more difficult than to preserve physical wealth. Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita said that He carries the burden to protect whatever attained from ruin of those people who devotionally contemplate and recite His Name. This condition will take place only when devotee believes in the promise and order of Lord as his life-mantra.

### Character:

In V.S. 1859, Shriji Maharaj visited Kariyani and chaired in the royal court of Macha Khachar. When the devotees got the message, they came to Kariyani for Darshan of Shri Hari. Mulaji Seth of Memka came to Kariyani for Darshan of Shri Hari as he received the message and pleaded a lot to Lord Shri Swaminarayan to visit his village Memka. So, Shriji Maharaj visited Memka by accepting the request of that devotee. At that time there were only four houses of Satsangis namely Mulaji Seth, Gurjar Suthar Hansrajbhai, Kanbi Patel Shyamji Agola and Kanbi Patel Shyamji

Kansagra in Memka. In Memka after witnessing the high feelings of devotees with full affection, Shriji Maharaj accepted the service of followers and devotees with full of love and during the stay of few days

in Memka, Shri Hari made devotees happy with the gallant tale-story of Satsang and when he took leave, four devotees with utter faith, obedience and devotion in Shri Sahjanand Swami went along with Shri Hari for a mile to give him farewell, and when they sought the blessing of Lord Swaminarayan by bowing down to His feet, Lord Swaminarayan asked all this devotees, “Do you admit with my one promise?” At that time all four answered, “Yes, Maharaj! we will do whatever you say.” And Lord Swaminarayan said, “You all four do not stay in this village. Leave this village within twenty days with all your household things.” At that time devotees asked, “Where will we go?” Lord Swaminarayan replied, “Wherever you find favourable place go there and leave this village and took a vow by holding my legs.” After that all four vowed by holding His legs and Lord Swaminarayan left Memka. After the departure of Lord Sahjanand Swami from Memka, all four gathered and decided that “we must not stay in this village though this belongs to our forefathers because it is an order of our Ishta Dev Shri Sahjanand Swami. The will of Shri Hari is our destiny.”

After that all four devotees with their family carried all household things and Mulaji Seth went to Limli, Sutar Hansrajbhai went to Kholiyad, Kanbi Shyamji Agola and Kanbi Shyamji Kansagra went to Chanpar. After that on the 21st day, Babo Diwan with the army of Gayakvad government came to fight with Vadhvan Darbar and encamped in Memka and asked, “Whose village is this?” and heard that this village belonged to Vadhvan Darbar,

he looted Memka village and after that burnt the village. Due to that a lot of property of villagers was damaged.

### Message:

This incident of Shiji Maharaja's Leela gives a very important message that when one lives as per the wish of God, God too lives for him. He discussed about prosperity or the well-being of the devotee in Bhagavad Gita which means "I look after everything of my devotee."

Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita has written three promissory notes for this human race. First promissory note is "न हि कल्याणकृत कच्चिद् दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति" One who walks on the path of well-being never face adversity or misery or degeneration.

Second promissory note is "योगक्षेम वहाम्यहम्" Yoga means what is not available that I make available to my devotee and what is attained; I protect it blissfully & skillfully.

Many times confluence happens to man but it is not attained. You get flower but you have to sense the fragrance for that one should have healthy smelling power of nose. Many people earn money but never derive happiness through money. Yoga is there but prosperity is absent. That's why God undertakes a great responsibility for his devotee, carry Yoga and prosperity.

Third promissory note is "न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति" Divine anxiety, physical anxiety and spiritual misery never approach to my devotee. Shri Sahjanand Swami asked for pain of scorpion's sting in every parts of His body on behalf of His devotee from His guru Shri Ramanand Swami and if begging bowl is written in the destiny of my devotee, he will become happy by food, clothes and shelter but that sheltered never become unhappy. Lord Swaminarayan makes prosper His beloved one, is the gist of this Leela Charitra.



### THE INNER BEAUTY

A man married a beautiful girl. He loved her very much. Unfortunately a skin disease developed in her body. Slowly she started to lose her beauty. It so happened that one day her husband left for a tour.

While returning he met with an accident and lost his eyesight. However their married life continued as usual. But as days passed she lost her beauty gradually. Blind husband did not know this and there was not any difference in their married life. He continued to love her and she also loved him very much.

One day she died. Her death brought him great sorrow.

He finished all her last rites and wanted to leave that town.

A man from behind called and said, 'Now how will you be able to walk all alone? All these days your wife used to help you.'

He replied, 'I am not blind. I was acting, because if she knew I could see her ugliness it would have pained her more than her disease. So I pretended to be blind. She was a very good wife. I only wanted to keep her happy.'

Moral :- \*Some times it is good for us to act blind and ignore one another's short comings, in order to be happy\*

1. "Alone I can 'Say' but together we can 'talk'.
2. "Alone I can 'Enjoy' but together we can celebrate
3. 'Alone I can 'Smile' but together we can 'Laugh'.

That's the BEAUTY of Human Relations. We are nothing without each other.



Kala Bhagat, a farmer and faithful devotee lived in Kundal. He served the saints of Shree Swaminarayan Bhagawan and talked to all about the bliss of Holy - Fellowship.

# MOUNTAIN-LIKE FAITH

Why are you bound elsewhere ? Come all to holy - fellowship.



The Power of  
Rock-Like Faith

**CHILDREN'S  
WORLD**

Wicked relatives usurped his fields and everything and excommunicated him. They harassed him in every possible manner.

Snatch away his fields.  
And make him outcaste.  
He will give up his  
Holy - Fellowship.



May someone hear me.  
And do justice.....



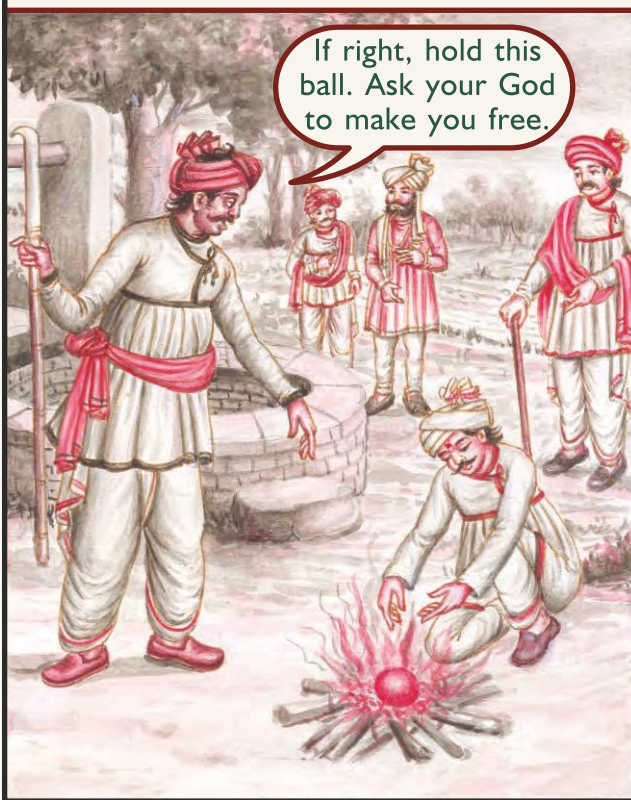
Saying so he complained to the local court.



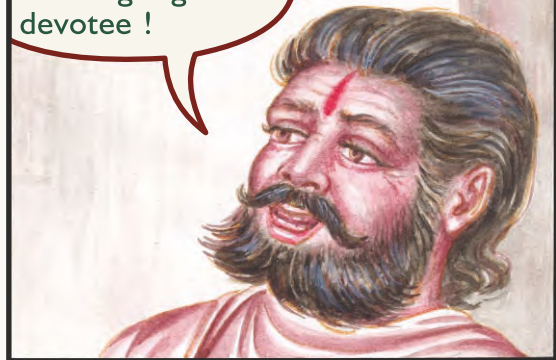
But the local corrupted court said in judgement...



Villagers gathered at the public-show. Kala Bhagat looking at the red-hot iron-ball thinks...



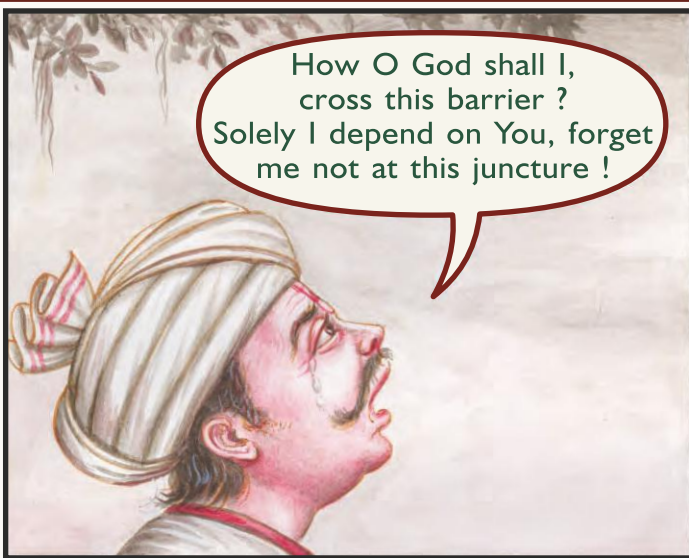
Oh ! Making show of being a great devotee !



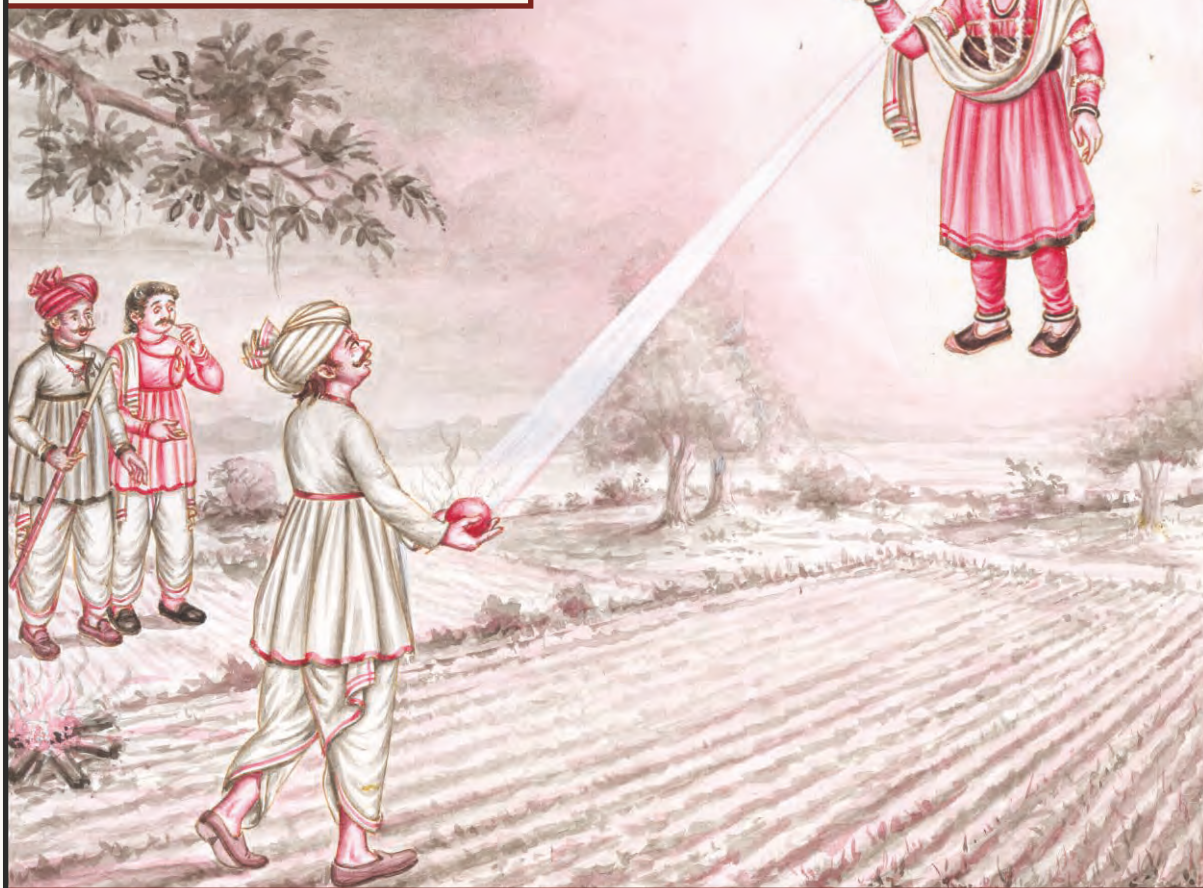
Now laugh at what happens !







Manifesting there Shree Hari said : "Kala,  
lift the ball, nothing will happen to you."



Kala Bhagat recovered his fields by walking around them with the red-hot ball in his hand ! Remember, fire or fireball burns all but not the devotee with **mountain-like** faith in God. The rock-like faith of Kala Bhagat saved him in his adversities. So, cultivate such faith in Shree Swaminarayan Bhagawan and you will be free from the fear of death.



# Evedom

Feminist Perspective  
in Swaminarayanism

by  
Prof. Dyuti Yajnik

A thought provoking article

## The Two Ashramas in Swaminarayanism

Instead of the four Ashramas of traditional Hinduism, Lord Shri Swaminarayan has recognized only two ashramas – Grihasthashram and Tyagashram. That of House-hold and Renunciation respectively. As it has been pointed out by Dr. J. A. Yajnik that, “These two Ashramas are alternative to each other and not the continuous stage of the life of one and the same individual. According to Lord Shri Swaminarayan, the individual is supposed to select any one of these two paths in accordance with his natural inclination. He has not regarded any one of these two Ashramas as intrinsically superior to the other.” (Yajnik J. A. 162-163)

The two Ashramas are equally open to both men and women. All religious persons, irrespective of their gender, can select one of the two Ashramas.

## Separation of two sexes in the Tyagashram.

Of all the virtues of a Sadhu continency has been regarded by Lord Swaminarayan as the most important virtue. As Manilal C. Parekh has pointed out, Shri Swaminarayan is reported to have said that “He had brought with Him from His home in the other world a nausea for the sex-side of life, and it was because of this that He wanted to separate the sexes, to overcome the very nature of which

was to make men and women unite and run into one another and thus to forget God.” (Parekh M. C. p.19)

He had therefore, very much insisted upon the strict rule that those who accept Tyagashram should very vigilantly avoid any kind of contact with the other sex. In order that this vow of absolute continency may be conveniently and strictly observed, the life of Sadhus and Samkhya Yoginis (female ascetics) in the temple should be with complete separation of the two sexes.

As pointed out by Dr. J. A. Yajnik, “The absolute separation of the two sexes is not only negatively useful in saving the sadhus and Samkhya Yoginis from the sexual sin which necessarily destroys the integrity of human personality, but also positively helpful in effecting a complete spiritual sublimation of the sexual impulse. As the sexual impulse is to a certain extent satisfied even in looking at or talking with or thinking about the other sex, absolute separation of the two sexes becomes inevitably necessary if the complete sublimation of the sexual urge is regarded as the ideal of those who go for the Tyagashram. (Yajnik J. A., op.cit. p. 167)

Thus, the justification for the separation of the two sexes can easily be seen if it is remembered that, according to Lord Shri Swaminarayan, the attainment of absolute continency, through the complete sublimation of the total of sexual energy is the first and foremost condition for the fulfillment of the mission of Tyagashram. (V. G. F. S. 14) Those who are likely to fail in fulfilling this first and foremost condition of Tyagashram, as we have seen, are advised by Lord Swaminarayan to stick only to the Grihasthashram, which, according to Him is, by no means, intrinsically inferior to the Tyagashram.

In connection with Lord Swaminarayana’s

attempt to effect a complete separation of the two sexes, it is interesting to note as Manilal C Parekh has pointed out, "There has not been perhaps a single religious movement of the size and power of this in the religious history of the world which has gone the length to which this went in the matter. Islam may be cited as one that has been even more radical than this, but therein the principle underlying the separation of the sexes in religious meetings and places is neither ascetic nor spiritual. There it is not so much a separation as a total exclusion of women from organized religious life. In the present movement, the women have a highly organized religious life of their own." (Parekh M. C. op.cit. p.19) That is, they have separated temples and independent system of women gurus. Here we can see the fulfillment of the aim of the second wave of feminist movement.

It is also necessary to point out that though Swaminarayanist separation is strict, it is not unreasonably rigid. This becomes clear by going through the following verse of Shikshaparti. S.P.182

"In cases where the life of their own or those of women are in jeopardy, they may be allowed contact (touch) or conversation with women, such contact being necessary for the saving of life." (This verse is for Naishtik Brahmachari - Perpetual celibacy and chastity.)

### **The Equality of Men and Women**

Swaminarayanizm believes that man should be a good religious man and woman should be a good religious woman, each developing in his or her own way. Swaminarayanizm thus, emphasizes the equality of both the sexes in cultural, moral and spiritual matters. In order that this kind of equality may be established, Lord Swaminarayan has enjoined on all House

holders that they shall never treat their wives merely as a means (S.P. 136) and shall behave with them in such a way as to preserve their dignity.

It is to be specially noted that Lord Shri Swaminarayan talked about the equality of men and women at the time when people could see no evil in the customs of infanticide and the Sati. Lord Swaminarayan successfully attempted the abolition of these evil customs at least in the province of Gujarat. He convinces the people that, "It is not right to commit infanticide, because thereby is committing a three-fold sin, viz., one, the murder of one's own family member, another of a child murder and third, the murder of one belonging to the female, i.e. the weaker sex." (Yajnik J. A., p.86)

With regard to the custom of Sati, he preached that instead of committing voluntary suicide which is really the most undesirable thing both from the point of view of religion and from morality, the woman whose husband is dead should either marry again or lead an austere life of devotion to God. (S.P. 163 - 172) He had also opened "an honourable career for religious minded and capable widows in allowing them to be a kind of Sadhvis, i.e. Samkhyayoginis who could preach and teach and under the influence of such widows, whose number was not small, other widows and women belonging to the Holy Fellowship made much progress in religious study and life." (Yajnik J. A., p..88) Again, it must be pointed out that Lord Swaminarayan's plea against all forms of adultery, had also helped a lot in the establishment of the dignity of women.

It is the characteristic practice of Lord Swaminarayan that men and women are not allowed, in the interest of purity and concentration, to mix in any way with one

another in the place of public worship and religious preaching. (S.P. 40) Lord Swaminarayan thus, provides for separate temples and assembly halls, meant only for females. This makes it necessary for women to become self-reliant in matters of learning, preaching and in the organization of religious and social life.

Keththleen Fischer says, “recognizing the importance of collaboration among women and the creative potential of women’s friendship and support groups, many women have found companionship for their spiritual journey in a circle of women rather than in one (male) director. The process of spiritual direction take place in these groups, Faith sharing, scriptural reflection, singing and prayer.” (Fischer K, p.3) Thus, it is seen that the modern feminist perspective is nicely fulfilled in Swaminarayanism. According to Swaminarayanist practice, if a male wants to become a ‘Sannyasi’, Acharya initiates him. Lord Swaminarayan had given instruction to Acharya in S. P. 123 that, “(The Acharya) ought never to impart instruction to any woman, except their nearest relations.” This is well seen in Swaminarayannism that for female Sadhakas, it has been instructed in S. P. 133 that, “The two wives of these (Acharyas) ... should initiate females...” Here, second wave feminist Patman would also be pleased by seeing that not male philosopher, but wise female only will be the guru of female seekers.

Thus, administratively Swaminarayanism had the separation of the sexes. Both men and women can initiate or do any spiritual activity within their group. This way, Lord Swaminarayan had given not only equal, but independent status to both men and women. It becomes obvious that the second wave feminism, which is more than the first one is fully satisfied by the Swaminarayanist

institutions well before that movement started.

In this way, Swaminarayanism has not only preached the equality of men and women, but has also practically established it as far as the religious life of its followers is concerned. Manilal C. Parekh had also rightly observed, “One noteworthy and beautiful feature of this body is the high place that the women have in life and several women – some scores of them – are mentioned in its literature as having contributed a great deal of devotion and service to the cause.” (Parekh M. C. op. cit. p.88)

(Contd.)

*Words  
of  
wisdom  
from  
Mahatma  
Vidur*



- 1▶ When everyone is asleep in the house, then do not keep awake alone.
- 2▶ Never insult fire, woman, Goddess, God, Guru and one's parents.
- 3▶ A straight forward man is always harassed, so don't remain too straight.
- 4▶ Whatever had to happen, happened; forget the past and live in the present.
- 5▶ Whenever you begin a new task, do not make big announcements about it.
- 6▶ To attain happiness, never sacrifice your religion.
- 7▶ Without invitation, never go to an unknown or a stranger's house.
- 8▶ Whoever wishes welfare of everyone is truly great.



# Health & Spirituality



Vaidyaraj Harinath Jha - Anand

## Mantra Chikitsa according to Ayurveda

Atharva Veda has many hymns addressed to Lord Indra, Varuna, Agni and other Gods for relief from a variety of diseases such as fever, leprosy, jaundice, urinary obstruction, diarrhea etc. Daiva-Vyapasraya Chikitsa is the spiritual way of healing in Ayurveda.

It consists of the use of Dana (taking recourse to gift), Swastyayana (propitiator rites), Mangala (auspicious observances), Homa (oblations), Niyama (observance of spiritual rules), Prayashchitta (atonement), Upavas (fasting), Mantra (Incantations) etc. Amongst all these “Mantra” is explained in Ayur Veda as the foremost in various places. It is explained in various events both in healthy and unhealthy conditions. It is equally useful in healthy people to maintain the health and to treat the diseases in diseased patients, hence it is even explained under the code of sadvritta of Ayurveda (virtuous conduct). As per Karma phala siddhanta diseases may be a sign of wrong action in present or previous life. Mantra provides mental empowerment in harmony with the rhythm of the cosmos to facilitate the cosmic healing force. In Ayurveda, apart from herbal remedies for diseases, stress is also laid on Mantra recitation to enhance healing.

“Mananaat traayate yasmat atasmata mantrah prakirtitah”

Shabdakalpadruma defines Mantra as the one whose repeated incantation helps one protect himself (from the bondage or troubles).

The Sanskrit word mantra combines the

root “man” (to think) with the suffix “tra” (instrument or tool). Therefore, “Mantra” literally means a tool for thinking. A Mantra is a set of words recommended in the holy Vedas, most of which follow the written pattern of two line shlokas, although they are often found in single line or even single word form like “OM” which is called the Pranava. “OM” gives us the realization of our individual self and helps in the removal of obstacles. For this reason, “OM” is considered to be the most fundamental and powerful mantra, and thus is prefixed and suffixed to all prayers. The syllable “OM” is composed of the three sounds A-U-M (in Sanskrit, the vowels A and U combine to become O). Continuous pronunciation of “OM” (Pranava) is capable to remove all diseases and also to maintain the health. One should repeat Pranava with three Pluta-Matras (or prolonged intonation) for the destruction of former sins and evils.

“Mantra” awakens the body's natural healing mechanism; the correct and systematic chanting of mantras produces a state where the end user receives positive energy which allows the body to come back to its natural state. These mantras are energy based sounds and hence the Vedic mantra treatment is a great solution to treat the physical and mental illnesses. When a Mantra

is repeatedly uttered it tunes to a particular frequency and this frequency establishes a contact of human soul with the cosmic energy and drags it into the human body and its surroundings providing a positive and healing atmosphere which in turn balances the energies and also increases the level of a certain type of energies, which promotes certain actions and events.

Mantras are loaded with power and are capable of penetrating the soul into deeper levels of consciousness by their unique sounds and vibrations. The sacred chanting of Mantras provides the power to cure diseases, ward off evils, attain blissful state and finally help in attaining liberation (Moksha) - The ultimate aim of Human life.

One can find numerous references emphasizing “Mantra” recitation in AyurVeda. Few references mentioned in Charaka Samhita are :

- In Jaatakarma Sanskar (that is the reciting of mantras in the newborn's right ear), Acharya mentions of a mantra requesting the Gods to protect the newborn from evil spirits.
- In the treatment of Jwara (fever), Acharya Charaka recommends chanting Vishnu Sahasra nama (thousand names of Lord Vishnu).
- In the treatment of poisoning, Unmaad (Insanity) and Apasmara (Epilepsy) also there is a mention of Mantra-chanting for treating the conditions.
- In treatment of aagantuja shopha (exogenous oedema),
- During the labour (Prasuti),
- Before collection of herbal drugs, and in the treatment of snake bite, antidotes are prepared while chanting specific mantras to increase the efficacy of the medicine etc.



### Purshottambhai Kacha - Dhoraji

‘Dharma’ or religion cannot be limited to any definition as ‘Dharma’ is a matter of conduct. The pleasure achieved from it is also a matter of self experience.

Nowadays all over the world each and every man has been finding burning himself in the fire of conflagration of woes. The only reason behind it that he has forgotten the path to God and chosen the path of hating religion, giving dominance to comport of irreligious order and leaving the path of good conduct; behaving like beasts. Those, not following religion always attain miseries in life. As a break in a vehicle is helpful to control it and save the driver from accidents; religion in life do serve as a good assistant to stop the individual from taking a perverse path and saving him from the consequences resulting from misbehaviour. Religion leads him on the right path motivating him through good thoughts.

Even if there is no learnedness or skill in social dealings in sincere devotees or great persons, they always do good to all... because they lead a religious life practically in their day to day life and passing through every moment of this momentary human life. The Shikshapatri, written for the good of all living beings by Lord Swaminarayan is the only divine religious scripture for all of us. It is our religious code of conduct. Shri Hari has graciously explained to all living beings in simple language “how our conduct should be according to religion.”

**For instance:**

अपि भूरिफलं कर्म धर्मापेतं भवेद्यदि।  
आचर्य तर्हि तत्रैव धर्मः सर्वार्थदोऽस्तिहि॥

**Translation :** The deed devoid of religion should not be performed even if it is beneficial as religion is the giver of all diligence therefore, religion should not be abandoned for the greed of any favourable result. || 73 ||

Let us have a look into the life episode of some great devotee who did not give up religion for the sake of their bread and butter and their life too.

Jiva Joshi was the native of Jetpur (The sacred place of coronation of Sahajanand Swami), a village then, in Rajkot district of Saurashtra. He was a staunch devotee of Shriji Maharaj.

Once, the king of Jetpur invited all the Brahmins of the entire village for dinner. All the Brahmins of Jetpur, excluding Jiva Joshi came for to enjoy the dinner. The entire congregation of Brahmins were jealous of Jiva Joshi's a true Brahmin-like conduct. They all together complained to the Durbar to instigate and incite him against Jiva Joshi. They also made a secret plan to add garlic in the Ladu (one kind of sweet which is next to heart to Brahmins). They all went to the Durbar and said, "Bapu, (a respectful addressing to a person of Rajput caste in Gujarat) the chorashi (an open dinner party given to all the Brahmins of the entire village) is incomplete till a Brahmin of the village remains hungry." When the Bapu asked them the reason, they replied, "Jiva Joshi won't take meal at your Darbar (court yard)."

The Bapu called for Jiva Joshi and asked, "Why won't you take meal?" Jiva Joshi replied, "I don't use onion, garlic and asafoetida in my meal. All these three stuff have been mixed in every item." Then other Brahmins began to say in complaining tone. "Bapu! today so

many Brahmins, following religious rules have come for your dinner. Would not they be holding their religion next to their heart?"

The Bapu again insisted but the firm minded Jiva Joshi said, "Bapu, even if I have to lose my life, my pledge shall remain at its peak. And still you wish to make me take the meal, I am prepared to cook myself and take it."

The Bapu under the influence of the words of the other Brahmins said, "Either take food with the others or leave your premises taking nothing with you at the moment." No sooner did Jiva Joshi hear the order of the village-owner than he left the village with his family.

Then he directly reached Junagadh where Shriji Maharaj had been. He and his sons had the Darshan of Shriji Maharaj and then narrated what had happened. Shriji Maharaj was very much pleased with Jiva Joshi who had not lost patience even in the hardest times and not stooped to the order of the village-owner. Shriji Maharaj handed over all His precious clothes and ornaments to Jiva Joshi. Moreover, Shri Hari wrote a letter addressed to Patidar Bhaktas Bhagabhai and Mulubhai of village Pithavadi.

Jiva Joshi came to Pithavadi. All there read the letter. They gave good house, furniture, furnishing, cows, and all necessary things to fill in the house for Jiva Joshi.

Thus, Jiva Joshi strictly followed the religious codes mentioned in the Shikshapatri and Shri Hari took great care of Jiva Joshi and his family!

All the codes of  
Dharma have the support of  
the Moorti of God.  
He who has faith in God, God would  
always dwell in his heart.  
Therefore Dharma too would remain  
in his heart.



*I bow down to the One Who brings  
happiness to all souls;  
I salute to the Friend of the poor,  
The Destroyer of pains.  
I bow to the Destroyer of torture,  
I salute to the Alpha and Omega of all;  
I extend my salute to Purushottam,  
the Ultimate above all.*

(Nishkulanand Swami)

In Holy Fellowship we bow down at different places with different mental states. Very often, we do not know the importance of the person whom we offer our salute. Frequently, this process is done mechanically and it remains seedless i.e. it can bring no fruit. It remains ineffective and unproductive. In the above

Vandan which is offered with such emotional state of mind, does not fail but it becomes effective and fruitful. In Hindu culture, there is a special meaning behind offering Naman with folded hands. In India, a person pays respect with folded hands to honour somebody, or to offer a warm welcome, or while expressing thanks or deep gratitude. Usually, a person stands before God, bows his head and prays with folded hands because he knows that God has done limitless obligations for him. Man tries to express his sense of gratitude. In Sanskrit, bowing is spelt as 'Namaste' - **I bow to the Supreme spiritual consciousness of the Lord Supreme streaming into you and me.** This is the principle behind it.



## WHATS & WHYS

*Answers to the questions of curious seekers*

### Vandan (Bowling)

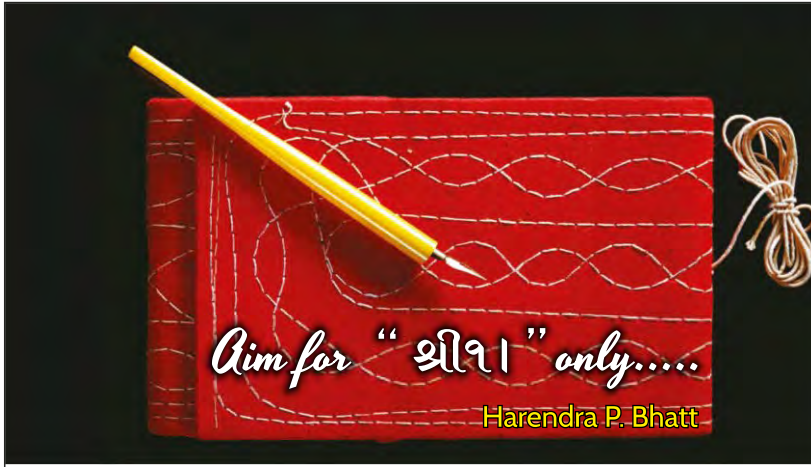
opening lines, Nishkulanand Swami provides guidance about offering a Vandan to Lord Supreme.

We join our hands and stand before the idol but we rarely think "how would be my Lord Swaminarayan, Who is residing in this idol as a heart-scient? What is his sacred importance?" If **Vandan** is done with this awareness it would become fruitful.

We should hold deeply in heart that **I bow my head before Lord Swaminarayan, Who grants happiness to all, and Who is the Savior of the poor, the Destroyer of unhappiness and agonies of devotees, Who is eternal, imperishable and above all, Who is called Purushottamnarayan.**

In Holy Fellowship when we meet each other, we say **Jay Swaminarayan** but this response remains only a formality. When we speak **Jay Swaminarayan**, we should touch the hands with our chest, and bowing the head, we should communicate the real meaning. Three parts of our body i.e. hands, head and heart become active in the process of Namaskar or Namaste. Hand represents the body, head represents the mind and the chest or heart represents the spirit of the soul. When we convey greetings in the form of Jay Swaminarayan, we combine body, mind and spirit to touch the large and omni-present consciousness of Lord Swaminarayan.

**Lalji Bhagat - Jnan Baug, Vadtal**



**This is a story of once upon a time.....**

There lived a businessman and a cobbler in a village. Both regularly went to a nearby town to buy goods.

The businessman would buy ghee while the cobbler would buy leather.

On the way to town, they would stop at a dhaba, owned by a woman. The woman welcomed all the travelers lovingly and treated them as per their business deal.

For lunch, the woman invited the businessman inside the dhaba and offered table-chair, while she asked the cobbler to sit outside the dhaba and also asked him to sit on the floor. After the lunch, both went to the town to buy goods.

After their purchase was over, both left the town to return to their village.

On the way, they stopped at the dhaba. For supper, the woman invited the cobbler to sit inside the dhaba and asked the businessman to sit outside and on the floor.

Both were surprised and shocked; they could not understand the hospitality provided to them by the dhaba owner woman.

The businessman felt insulted. He muttered, "Bahenji, I belong to upper class, I am a Bania. While he is a cobbler. Why am I asked to sit outside? In the afternoon today, you rightly invited me to sit inside the Dhaba and asked the cobbler to sit outside. Why this change for supper? I fail to understand your treatment."

The woman replied, 'you are right. I asked you to

sit inside and you are asked now to sit outside. I do not consider caste for my treatment. All are equal for me. You are not upper caste for me and that cobbler is not lower caste for me.

'Then why..'

The dhaba owner woman interrupted the businessman and said, "listen sir, I considered your objective for my treatment. In the morning you went to town to buy ghee. You thought about the good health of the animals and their more products. If the animals were productive, you thought of purchasing ghee at a lower rate. While the cobbler wanted to buy leather. He would get the leather at a lower rate only when there was more death ratio among the animals. You hoped for more productivity, while he hoped for more causality, so I invited you to sit inside the dhaba and he was asked to sit outside.

'So, we did'

Again the dhaba owner woman stopped the businessman and said, "Sir, now your intention is changed. You wish that the animals should die, so that there will be less production of ghee and as a result you will get higher prices. Now the cobbler thinks, the animals should not die so that there would be shortage of leather and he would get high rate. Your intentions have changed. This is the reason for my different treatment."

There is nothing wrong in aspiring for higher profit but we should not ignore professional ethics. Our intentions should be noble.

Our Dharma has asked us to aspire for श्री१। only.

(Note : श्री१। means the Dharma allows us to make profit up to 25%)



# Prasadi

The Articles graced by Shree Hari



## GRACE ABOUNDING

During His holy tour Bhagwan Shree Swaminarayan visited the town of Botad. The enthusiasm of the residents of this relatively small town was so great that His visit electrified the whole town. Wearing the best of their clothes and ornaments the residents formed a long serpentine queue to pay their respect. Following the custom each and every person in the queue had brought gifts consisting of flowers, garlands, dresses, ornaments, crystal-sugar, coconuts, coins etc. as per their financial condition. Shree Hari evaluated all these gifts with the faith and affection behind them and not by their financial worth.

The grocer of the town, a Bania by caste unwillingly closed his shop as he was sorry to lose a day's income but he was afraid about his absence in the queue as he feared the wrath of the townsmen. Before locking the shop he had picked up an internally rotten coconut to present it to Shree Hari. He thought none would know the inner content of the coconut and he would certainly secure the blessings of Shree Hari. What a profitable transaction!

With the rotten coconut he joined the queue and when it was his turn he offered the coconut at the holy feet of the Omniscient Lord! Shree Hari cast a meaningful smile at him! Shreeji Maharaj remarked : "Have you brought a good

water-full coconut or a worthless rotten one?"

The grocer was unable to hide the fact. Telling the truth for the first time in his life, he said, "My coconut is as rotten as my mind but the divine light of the moon falls equally on a palace, a cottage or a dung hill! I have no doubt about Your majesty to raise even the greatest sinner. I pray You to carry my soul to Akshardham when I cease to breathe!"

Such sincere confession by a tricky Bania moved the heart of our Lord, Who promised to fulfill his greatest ambition of life.

That day brought a turning point in the life of that grocer, who became a great devotee while carrying on his trade of grocer in a fair manner.

Years rolled on and the time was up for the grocer to say goodbye to the world. His bedroom was suddenly illuminated with divine light as Shree Hari personally arrived. He had that rotten coconut in His hand. He said: "Look Shethji. Here is the rotten coconut offered by you but your confession about it earned My grace to change your life for the better. So I have come to fulfill My promise to take you to My divine abode - Akshardham!"

The grocer together with Shree Hari ascended to Akshardham.

*The Coconut fruit,  
became the cause of redemption !*

**Shantikumar Bhatt**





## YEOMAN'S SERVICES

Swaminarayan Way of Life teaches us to provide Yeoman's services to the society. In winter, blanket distribution, in summer chappals and buttermilk and in monsoon temporary shelter facilities are provided to the needy people. Services of various kinds take place round the year. Even the birds are not forgotten too. Before the scorching summer-heat takes its toll on the mute, the temple authorities distributed earthen water-bowls among more than hundred villages.

Main purpose is to preserve environment. The Gomati lake and Jnan Baug at Vadatal are time example of protection, preservation and presentation of environment. It is easy to find such examples at many places in the Holy Fellowship. The reason is clear - Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan blesses such activities!