

SAAR-SIDDHI
(Ultimate - Attainment)
By
Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami

The devotional literature of Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami is like a moon amongst the stars illuminating the innermost of aspirants. Sadguru Nishkulanandji has been a foremost luminous celibate amongst the group of the supreme celibate saints of Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan. Nishkulanand Swami wrote the sacred book of "*Saar Siddhi*", each verse and word of this great poem of devotion describes the supreme majesty of Shree Hari.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami had been a unique saint and most dedicated disciple of Sahajanand Swami. The book 'Saar Siddhi' written by him, acts like a lighthouse – a beacon amidst the stormy ocean of life. It illuminates the path for pilgrims through eternal happiness and bliss of the divine. This book is the best amongst spiritual literature. It is an everlasting tiffin for the soul in his pilgrimage through life.

What does 'Saar' mean? Saar means essence or nectar, which is most important or essential. Lord Shree Hari is the most essential and essence of everything. This book or scripture therefore aims to achieve or attain Lord Shree Hari. Saar Siddhi is the ways and means to attain the supreme Lord Shree Hari. The divine image of God - Shree Hari - is not attainable without detachment; similarly, the progress on the path of devotion is not possible without devotion. This scripture aims to attain emancipation and eternal bliss. Devotion is the only means to realise the divine image of Shree Hari. To be associated to God with selfless love is called devotion. This aim can be attained only by devotion.

Kadavun - 1

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami puts a lot of stress on the attainment of idols – the image of God. The image of God is not easily attainable. It is most difficult to see God in person. The scriptures have shown the ways and means for realisation of God for attaining God in his human form. *Dharma* (ethical duties), *Bhakti* (devotion), *Gyan* (ultimate knowledge), and *Vairagya* (detachment) coupled with *Sant Samagam* (holy company of saintly souls) are the ways to attain God. Saar Siddhi narrates these in detail to help us in our realisation of God in his divine human form.

What do we need to possess, to please Lord Shree Hari?

Be like an illuminating pillar.

A fire ignites other fires. A life illuminates other lives. Love sustains and spreads love and enmity sustains and spreads enmity! If we desire to reform and rebuild others, then in the first instance we too will have to revolutionise our own life, to transform it into a most powerful magnet. We will have to generate detachment and devotion in our own life to reform others.

An illuminating lamp holds the capacity to ignite thousands of extinguished lamps, but millions of extinguished lamps - even in their unified capacity, cannot light an extinguished lamp. A *Satpurusha* - a saintly soul - holding within him the fire of life to gift to others the illuminating flames of life. He can take them onto the path of virtues. He can kindle in them the light of ultimate knowledge, light of devotion, detachment and ethical duties.

One who is not at peace within himself, cannot bestow others with eternal peace. One who himself is ignorant cannot illuminate others with ultimate knowledge. One, who knows not the art of swimming, cannot teach others to swim. A lazy and good for nothing person cannot teach others the ways of absolute consciousness.

We will have to become peaceful, if we want to give peace to others. The luminous beacons like Swaminarayan Bhagwan, Shree Rama, Shree Krishna, Sadguru Muktanand Swami and Sadguru Gopalanand Swami achieved this. We too are required to transform ourselves into pillars of light to illuminate others just as honeybees are drawn automatically to a blossoming flower and nectar like pollen is transported automatically to various destinations.

We are required to desist from the path of sin, we are required to be generous, we are required to live at the higher plane through spiritual ascent, we are required to awaken from the sleep of delusion, we are required to do devotion. If aspired to act in this way to become a pillar of luminous light, then such life would illuminate the lives of hundreds and thousands.

Satsang has changed and reformed the ideology and thinking of many people. The virtuous association and spiritual wisdom of his life had changed the ideology, thinking and lifestyle of Tulsi by transforming him into Saint Tulsidas. Our scriptures have said:

Sandalwood is cool but the moon is yet cooler than sandalwood. However the saints are cooler still. Holy company of a saint revives our inner powers from its dormant state.

We should live in the holy company of Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami. We should live in his company by reading and studying his scriptures - his book of Saar Siddhi. Saar Siddhi holds within it the immense power to emancipate souls.

(Find out the essence – the nectar of everything. Grab the opportunity and take full advantage to please Lord Shree Hari)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami insists on pleasing Shree Hari. Try your best to earn the pleasure of Shree Hari. Lord Shree Hari (Bhagwan Swaminarayan) began his great work of Satsang at the tender age of eleven years and accomplished great achievements within a short period of forty-nine years. He had not wasted a single day, by sitting idle. He had toured and travelled continuously day and night, in rain and cold, in heat and storms. If he was hated somewhere, he would still stop there for penance and meditation or stop to make available the means of emancipation for his few followers residing at such place. He walked constantly and visited every place in India - forests, hills, mountains, shrines, hermitages, the homes of the poor or rich people alike, villages, towns and cities. Why did he perform such hard work and painful tours? He did it for the salvation of the infinite number of souls.

Identify the opportune time to please Shree Hari!

Shree Hari has said, "O Paramhansas! Introduce daily a new soul to the image of God. Practise virtues and ethical duties in your life and help others to practise it."

Lord Shree Hari displayed his pleasure by a warm embrace. He displayed his pleasure by gifting his own shawl to the saints and devotees. He showered his pleasure by offering *prasadam* from his own dish. He blessed them by petting their backs.

(A devotee pleases the thirty-three carore Gods and deities, when he pleases Lord Shree Hari.)

Thirty-three carore (1 carore = 10 million) Gods and deities are pleased, when Lord Shree Hari is pleased. The great heavenly serpent, the Sungod, Moon, Indra, Brahma, Shankar and others Gods are pleased on earning the pleasure of Shree Hari. It is not necessary to contact an individual God to earn their pleasure. Just as the whole tree, inclusive of all the branches and leaves receive water and nourishment are irrigated at the root of the trunk, similarly all gods and deities shall be pleased if we please Lord Shree Hari, practising ethical duties.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami preaches to nurture firm faith and trust in God. Respect everyone and don't insult anyone. The satsang shall be green and lively. Your faith in the form of God should be like that of a married woman. *Sattvik* Gods are always respectable and deserve a hearty salute.

Faith and trust should be firm. Such faith should not be founded on greed or elemental need. It should be for ultimate emancipation. Lord Shreeji Maharaj admired the faith of Nandubhai. Vajiba of Vijapur was another faithful devotee

of Shree Hari, though she never saw Lord Shree Hari. Vajiba was a firm and faithful devotee of Shree Hari. She was well matured in her faith in God. Lord Shree Hari disguised himself in the form of an ascetic and went to her house. He spoke badly of Shree Hari to weaken her faith and trust, but the faithful lady Vajiba rebuked angrily, "Look you ascetic! You are too small to shake my faith. Even the greats like Brahma cannot shake my faith." Vajiba never knew that Lord Shree Hari himself was arguing with her to weaken her and test her in her faith in Lord Sahajanand.

Such firmness and trust should be maintained always. We should not look here and there for support from others. Depend absolutely on Lord Shree Hari. Surrender to Shree Hari. Sadguru Premanand Swami sings:

(I chant the names of Sahajanand Swami. I
desire not to chant the names of other Gods.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that though there may be many stars in the sky, the light would not be evident at sunrise.

The devotional service removes the darkness of ignorance and spreads the light of knowledge. Such is explained the importance of devotional faith, Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says:

Many zeros suffixed to zero gives a zero – hence add no value to a number if 'one' is not prefixed to it. The efforts of writing such zeros are nothing but blackening of paper.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to remember God, sing devotional songs of God, and do satsang at *samaiyas*. He asks us to live a holy life by practising the preachings and orders of Shree Hari. The soul indulging in other acts earns nothing. His worldly life and worldly acts for the enjoyment of the sense objects are like writing and adding zeros. In his life 'account' there shall be no balance except those worthless zeros! No balance, no capital, no wealth! The people chasing wealth and money for ephemeral pleasures hold nothing in their balance sheet of life except, those innumerable zeros. So remember God and do devotional service of God, forsake ephemeral objects and activities if you wish to maintain a sizeable balance saved and secured through devotion and dedication in your balance sheet of life.

(Forsake ephemeral activities and work at your
best to please Shree Hari. Don't miss your target. Act
wisely.)

Be firm to please Lord Shree Hari. Be prepared to face agonies and torments. Act sincerely and firmly to accomplish your mission of attaining God. Your ultimate aim should be to please Shree Hari.

(Be firm in your decision. Try your best to discover and attain the ultimate reality. Nishkulanandji says that the soul in such circumstance attains the abundant pleasure of Shree Hari.

God bestows abundant pleasures, if pleased by his devotees. God is the supreme master, and holds everything at his disposal. The pleasures enjoyed by us are the blessed gifts from God. The lamps are lighted without oil. Vehicles are running without a horse or bullock. Drinking water comes to us from thousands of miles. Man flies in the sky like birds by chartering an aeroplane. People talk to each other directly on a phone despite a distance of thousands of miles. A journey takes no time due to swiftness of trains and planes. A small machine works equal to the labour of a thousand labourers. These are the comforts and pleasures desired and enjoyed by us. Remember it well. Each passing minute, hour or day shortens your life – one's life span is decreasing fast. Death may come at any moment and shatter everything.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami teaches us to walk on the path of virtuous acts. A virtuous life emancipates the soul and consigns it to the divine abode of Shree Hari.

Kadavun - 2

(The devotee acts in various ways by different means to please Lord Shree Hari. But many from them choose the way or means of their liking and do nothing else.)

The devotees try to please God by various means and ways. But the means adopted by them are not in accordance to the scriptures. They are chosen as per their personal liking. Such devotees are 'moody', acting per their own liking. Those who act as per the orders and teachings of their Guru are real disciples. They are real followers, true devotees.

Shree Shivalbhai of Bhavnagar was a true devotee of Shree Hari. Though he was a rich man, he lived a simple and ego-free life. He had no addiction, no bad habits. Once he came to Junagadh to join Satsang of Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami. Shivalbhai was not physically well in those days. He felt giddiness and nausea, and therefore kept a piece of betelnut in his mouth. Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami and aspirants were absorbed in heart-to-heart dialogue penetrating the elemental being to attach the soul to the supreme consciousness. The assembly was still as a picture and the aspirants merged spiritually in the flow of divine dialogue. But stillness and eternal bliss broke suddenly, when a

cracking sound of chewing came from the listeners. Swami asked, "Who is chewing a piece of wood by ignoring the eternal tastes of spiritual dialogue? Who is he?" Shivalbhai rose from his seat, lowered his head and submitted with due decorum, his apology and took an oath not to eat betelnut ever again in his life.

Though he was scolded in the Sabha, Shivalbhai took it as blessed words, confessed his fault and forsook taste forever. He disowned personal likings. We shall attain the state of a realised soul if we forsook our likings and dislikings. This shall be the state of true innocence.

Hand Over the Rein of Your Mind to Your Guru.

The support and guidance from a true and enlightened saint is a must for an aspiring devotee. One cannot attain God without support and guidance from a true saint. One cannot correct his wrong doings and follies without a saintly soul.

Farmers produce wheat in their farms. Depending on the season and land, a farmer produces from ten quintals to a thousand quintals of wheat by farming his land. The wheat so produced is sold in bulk.

Small stones and pebbles mixed in with the wheat are sold at the rate of the wheat. We are like pebbles and stones among the saintly souls. The saints are like wheat. Discard your personal liking and live in the holy company of the saints to emancipate the soul.

(A moody devotee acts as per his liking without doing anything else. Without detachment, he cannot act wisely. The means and the ways he uses are without any understanding).

If he is not fully detached, a devotee acts as per the whims of his mind. He becomes adamant, and ignores emancipatory advice of elders and saints. He will not believe in the words of senior saints. He speaks and acts thoughtlessly, behaves at his free will. A true disciple - a true devotee acts as per the advice of his Guru. He adopts the ways and means suggested by his Guru. Thus there is a vast difference and contradiction between these two categories of aspirants. In emancipation too, there shall be difference. God likes a true and faithful disciple, though the devotion is lesser in comparison to a moody devotee. God shall not like a moody devotee, despite his great devotion.

Once, a large number of devotees were assembled in a meeting to find out the most suitable and effective means to please God. They discussed amongst themselves and suggested various means to earn the pleasure of God. Some from them favoured *Japa* to please Bhagwan and quoted the example of Valio - a notorious robber. By means of *Japa* - chanting names of Shree Rama - he changed his life, became Great Rishi Valmiki and wrote the epic Ramayan. But a few

from them objected suggesting pilgrimage of holy places and shrines, great rivers and sacred mountains as a most suitable means to please God. But again there were others who quoted examples of great kings and landlords who pleased God by performing the holy fire-sacrifice. Some from them suggested *Vratta* and *Niyam* to avoid huge expenses of holyfires. Few amongst them suggested *Kamal Pooja*, and some others suggested pilgrimage of Kashi and putting a saw on the head to cut a boy in two pieces to please Lord Shiva. Thus, they discussed various means to please god. They thought of giving up life by jumping from a mountain and others desired to submerge their bones in the snow of the Himalayas. They supported their suggestion by quoting examples of the Pandavas. Some suggested walking into the forest and burning the body in a wild forest fire. Some suggested forsaking worldly relations, wife and wealth to please God. Some were of the opinion of growing lengthy hair and nails on the body. Some suggested observing '*Moun*' (observing the vow of silence). Some suggested living without attires. Some were favouring fasts and some desired to live on fruits and leaves. They discussed amongst themselves hundreds of means to please God.

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(They are adopting various means with a desire to please God. According to Nishkulanand Swami, they may be a devotee of God but for sure they are not without desire).
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Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that these people are devotees of God, but they are not desire free. They are ready to do *japa*, *tapa*, *teerath* (penance and pilgrimage with constant japa of Bhagwan), but with a desire to get something from God. What do they desire?

Kadavun - 3

(Most of the devotees do devotion with some expectation. Their devotion is not pure or selfless. They expect land, kingdom, pleasure, powers, freedom etc. They are hankering after ephemeral pleasures).

The soul is agile like a baby monkey. The soul is not happy with what it has and tries impatiently to get more and more, but there is no end to his desires and aspirations. To attain supra-human attainment, they do difficult penance. Some are engaged in painful penance to attain the throne of Indra. Some donate liberally to get a male child - an heir to continue his lineage. They are like beggars begging food to eat and clothes to cover their body. Their needs and wants are unlimited, some are hungry of fame and some are yearning for respect.

The world is running after these to satisfy their needs and hunger. But be careful, having too much of this is very harmful. The Katha of "Saar Siddhi" needs to be studied well.

Here is an ancient episode. Lord Shreeji Maharaj at Gadhpur graced a religious assembly under the shade of a *Mango* tree. Shreeji Maharaj said, "This is a religious assembly of Akshardham."

When Shree Hari pronounced these divine words, divine light emanated from the person of the smallest of devotees sitting at the back of senior devotees and saints. The light spread throughout the whole assembly. The senior saints and the senior devotees who graced the front rows of the assembly were amazed by such a divine miracle, when they looked back at the small devotees. These seniors thought that though small in age, these younger devotees were big and great in devotion. They thought to themselves that they were not worthy to be sitting in the front rows as they had ignored these juniors.

Shreeji Maharaj then addressed the assembly and explained to them that to hold a seat or to offer a seat in the front row is worldly decorum. Those who are doing devotion of God, are great and respectable. A front seat is nothing but a formality. A big chair or a well-furnished seat cannot be of any use, but a released soul (*Mukta*), though he may be of a poor disposition, may hold divine powers and the abilities to emancipate the masses in no time.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that true devotees never aspire for emancipation; they aspire for God's pleasure.

Don't do penance, devotion, donation, *vratt* or *japa* for any selfish motive. Do it without any desire. Don't beg for worldly pleasure or sense objects.

(An egotistic man puts in great effort to attain worldly pleasures. He bears bodily pains to earn greatness.)

Egotistic people are torn by desires and aspirations. They long for worldly pleasure, respect and honour. Ego-free souls are simple and humble.

True greatness is something different, something unique. Some are great due to their age; some are important due to their wealth. Some priests giving sermons are proud of their oratory. Some promote themselves as great by wearing large rosaries around their neck, some by doing *Japa* of *Jana Mangala* or *Sarva Mangala* or *Narayan Kavacha*. These are the worldly ways of ephemeral greatness.

Lord Shreeji Maharaj conveys differently in his Gadhada Pratham (31) discourses:

'A devotee is great by his obedience to the orders of God and by his faith and trust in God. One who is firm in his faith and trust in God, and follows the orders of God most obediently, shall be called a great devotee.'

“Bhagat! If the mango juice is sour then add some sugar to it,” said Shreeji Maharaj to Roopram Thakkar once. Shreeji Maharaj and his saints were at Umreth to receive *Thaal* at the house of Roopram Thakkar. The mango juice served to Shree Hari was very sour. Shreeji Maharaj drew attention to Roopram to modify the taste of the juice by adding sugar to it. Shreeji Maharaj instructed him thrice to bring sugar for the mango juice but the miser Roopram found an escape and submitted, “Maharaj! There is no such tradition of adding sugar in mango juice.” Thus he refused to serve sugar to the Almighty.

Now, on other hand, there is the ideal example of Kalyandas. Shree Kalyandas of village Kadu read the letter of Shree Hari addressing by name the selected Satsangis. The listed names ended with ‘etc.’ Released soul Kalyandas believed himself to be included in the word ‘etc.’ tagged at the end of the list. He immediately discontinued his marriage rituals, forsook everything and walked away from the marriage *mandapam* to submit absolutely at the lotus feet of Lord Shree Hari. Such dedicated devotees are great among the Satsangis.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to forsake false pride. Obedience to God is the real greatness. Swami narrates here the ways of an ignorant devotee:

(They please God by putting in great efforts.
But they are so ignorant that, they beg for physical
pleasure, when God pleases to them)

Such ignorant devotees live at the worldly plane and by their penance and *vrat* they please God to seek wealth, health, spouse and progeny?

(O God! Let my mind dwell in your divine
form. Many of your souls leave this elemental form
while singing your devotional songs. O God! I beg
humbly your blissful company in this birth and in
future births. O God! Please grant me constant
devotion and your company in my last breath.)

Pray to God and beg for the detachment that was realised by Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami. Beg for the devotion that was displayed in the devotional ways of Laduba and Jivuba. Beg for the firmness and faith exhibited by Dada Khachar, beg for the meditational concentration that was seen in Parvatbhai’s devotion. Beg for such devotion, but beg not for the elemental.

(A man would not be able to beg for a proper
thing if he is not a desire-free. These worldly souls
are like that cobbler who begged rebirth as a cobbler
when he sacrificed his body at the holy altar at *Kashi*.)

Long, long ago there was a cobbler living in a small village. He was trying to earn a livelihood by mending the footwear of villagers. The cobbler's family was poor. The husband and wife used to quarrel amongst themselves in that extreme poverty. *Kaliyuga* dwells amongst quarrelsome people. Therefore, there shall be no peace or prosperity in such families. The poor and helpless cobbler lost his temper and left his house to relieve himself from that daily fight. Roaming here and there in extreme anxiety, he went to *Kashi* (in Benaras) and made up his mind to sacrifice his present body by getting it sawed into two pieces. In ancient times there were many irrational beliefs sustained by blind faith. Those who were agonised were giving away their lives by sawing their body or jumping from a mountain such as *Girnar* or by drowning a female child in milk or by burning a widow on a pyre of her deceased husband. Lord Swaminarayan manifested himself on the earth and stopped these traditions founded on blind faith. Lord Shree Hari preached and guided them on the sacred path of true ethical duties and enlightened them with true religion of devotion.

The cobbler came to Kashi and went to the shrine to sacrifice himself by getting his body cut by a saw. The so-called priest asked, "What is your wish? What do you want to be in your next birth? Think wisely and choose that which is most desirable."

The cobbler thought first to be a farmer, but the thoughts of hard toil, rain, heat and cold, to be faced by him as a farmer, discouraged him instantly. He then thought to become a merchant or *Seth*. Businessmen and merchants live a most comfortable life. They live most comfortably in palace like houses and enjoy the comfort of wealth. But what if the business went wrong and drew heavy losses? What would happen if the servants and accountants went on the wrong path and cheated him? He and his family may suffer in such circumstance.

He then thought to be born as a prince to rule the state as a king. Wealth and power both would be at his disposal. Royal throne, huge army, a splendid court and various forms of royal service would be under him. The subjects would treat him like their God and saviour. But what if a neighbouring King invaded the kingdom? One's life and very existence would be at stake for the kingdom and his subjects. Furthermore there would be risk of mutiny from the state army and revolt from the subjects. It would be very risky to choose this life for his next birth. He dropped that idea immediately.

Much of the time was wasted in screening various categories of people and he found serious drawbacks in all of them. The priest conducting the rituals of sawing reminded him impatiently and asked about his final choice to recommend his wish. The cobbler then thought that being a cobbler was not so bad if compared to the other categories of people. As a cobbler, he was not as unfortunate as the others were. Therefore he declared open heartedly, "I would

like to be born as a cobbler in my next birth. Hurry, put the saw to my head and execute the sacrifice.”

The executioner took the saw in his hand and said, “You are a cobbler in this birth, and in the next birth you wish to be born as cobbler too! Isn’t that ridiculous?”

We too are like that cobbler, doing *Japa, Tapa, Daan-Punya* and devotion to attain objects of *Maya* (sense objects) from God! Stop this nonsense; be firm in your faith and act at the will of God!

(Sadguru Nishkulanand Muni says that the worldly souls have no hold on their mind and senses, they know nothing about the ultimate aim of human life, such souls are not capable of attaining the ultimate truth – the supreme wealth.)

Worldly pleasures are insignificant, perishable and short-lived. The married and unmarried both have reasons to repent for their status. Rich people and the poor are unhappy. This is the distinct attribute of this world. Man would fail miserably if he tried and was to get peace and pleasure. God is the only destination for eternal peace and blissful pleasure. The goddess of prosperity and wealth Lakshmi – resides therefore at the lotus feet of Lord Vishnu. Pleasure and peace are plentiful in the refuge of God.

Kadavun - 4

(The forester likes to live in the forest. They don’t like the society life of a village or town. They eat fruits, leaves, flowers and roots. They don’t like to eat tasty meals)

Those who live in the forest, enjoy living in the forest. They prefer not to live in a village community. They eat fruits and leaves and they enjoy it with love. Though other meals may be very tasteful, they don’t like to partake of them. Wild fruits may be sour harming their teeth, but they still dislike the taste of conventional meals.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that those who have damaged their teeth by consuming tamarind would not like to relish the sweet taste of *Gor*. Similarly forsake ego and do devotion of God.

Grasp the core of the Issue

Shreeji Maharaj was gracing his chamber at the royal palace of Dada Khachar at Gadhada. Shree Alaiya Kahchar of Jhinhavadar, Harji Bhagat, Uka Khachar and others came to Shree Hari and prayed humbly to be initiated into saint-hood. Shreeji Maharaj said to them, “It would be benedictory for you, if

you acted as per my orders. Here in the court of Dada Khachar, we need good managers. You should work here as a manager. This will help you to serve me regularly and you shall be benefitted by my *darshan*."

They obeyed the orders of Shreeji Maharaj and took good care of agriculture and farming, accounts, house keeping and other responsibilities. They listened to the discourses during *Katha-Varta* delivered by Shreeji Maharaj. They did personal service of Shree Hari by helping him to bathe, serving sandalpaste to Shree Hari, made flower garlands for Shree Hari and designed attires of flowers to please Shree Hari. Though they worked sincerely and most attentively, the ego within disturbed their mind constantly as they had come to be saints, but were made managers for Dada Khachar - servants to Dada Khachar. They were somewhat upset and dissatisfied. Their aim was not fulfilled.

Lord Shreeji Maharaj knew what they thought and felt. Shreeji Maharaj desired to recede their ego by displaying to them the glory and majesty of Dada Khachar and others. That was the only way to bring them on the path of selfless servitude. Shree Hari sent them into instant meditational trance where they reached the divine abode of Akshardham. Jivuba in her divine form of Lakshmiji served there most devoutly, Lord Shree Hari. Laduba was in the service of God to serve meals. Rajbai was engaged in service in her divine form of Saraswati. Dada Khachar himself was dwelling there as eternal free soul in the presence of God. The managers prayed for pardon, when they came back to their elemental state, "Maharaj! You have enlightened us by your ultimate knowledge. They are all eternal released souls of Akshardham. We have ignored their majesty and divinity. We are really very sorry for our ignorance. You have destroyed our ego and selfishness by consigning us into the meditational trance."

Shreeji Maharaj said, "Now, you have grasped the core of the issue!"

By narrating examples, Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that addiction destroys wisdom. Intoxication pollutes a stable mind. If acted carelessly, intoxication may rain on one's life.

(Man is torn apart by negligible worries, he cannot resist serious worries. He would not be able to swim across the ocean of worldly life, if he is not able to pass through even a small desert.)

Man forgets God in the glitter of temporary happiness, and desires heavenly pleasures! The pleasure of heaven is like hell, if compared to ultimate emancipation.

He has no knowledge of the whereabouts of true happiness. Some look for it in a male child, some try to find it in wealth and pleasures, some look for it in sumptuous meals and sense objects. If true happiness were available in

ephemeral objects, then nobody would be unhappy on this earth. Billions of families and individuals have all this at their disposal, but still they are unhappy.

Though there were four sons, none were present at the time of the last breath of Dasharath. Emperor Dhritrashtra was father to one hundred sons, but none from them were present to offer him the last sip of water. King Sagar had sixty thousand sons, but none from them were present at the time of his death. There are many that believe wealth to be the perennial source of happiness. King Nand of the Nand-dynasty was the wealthiest of kings, but his wealth was swept away in a stormy flood and ultimately he lost his life to fend like a beggar. Therefore, don't look for true happiness in the negligible objects like progeny, wealth and worldly pleasures. In the beginning, these temporary pleasures of the world look like the light of Diwali – pleasant and pleasurable, but in the last phase of our life they burn us like the fire of Holi. Worldly life is like a deep and dark well. Awaken from this and do devotion.

(Be wise and think twice, before you step on the path of sensual pleasures. Happiness and sorrow are the major attributes of worldly life. A slap from sorrows and pains should be enough to awaken from the slumber of worldly pleasures).

Sadguru Nishkulanand Muni says, "The soul has enjoyed repeatedly the pleasure of the ephemeral world. The soul has enjoyed repeatedly the pleasures befitting a King and has enjoyed the royal powers of an emperor." Lord Shreeji Maharaj has said in his Vachanamrit (Gadhada First 21) the soul has enjoyed repeatedly the pleasure by a birth as a woman, and in similar way has enjoyed the pleasures as a man. The soul in its journey of life and death has seen almost all the regions, countries, continents, seas and oceans. It travels continuously from birth to birth and species to species through its never ending cycle of the births and death. The soul will have to loiter continually, if he failed to do devotion.

(Therefore, quit the path of worldly pleasure and avail this opportunity of self-benediction. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to do devotion of Lord Shree Hari.)

Life of a man is temporary and most vulnerable like a tiny drop of water clung to the leaf of a tree. The drop sparkles like a gem if it is clung to the leaf, but if it were to fall to the earth due to wind; the drop would cease to be. It would be lost in the heap of soil. Ephemeral pleasures please us through the sense objects, whilst the soul lives within the body. The contemporary man is like a thirsty deer in the forest. The mirage in the forest looks like water to a

thirsty deer and to quench its insatiable thirst, the poor soul runs to catch the mirage and ends his own life in futility. We poor souls are most pitiable! God, the scriptures and the saints are available to us, yet we are chasing day and night the objects of ephemeral pleasures – the five sense objects. Set everything aside and do devotion of Lord Shree Hari.

Pada - 1

(The lotus feet of Shree Hari are the seat of eternal amnesty and salvation. Do devotion and service of God. Set aside everything and know the ultimate truth.)

Here is an ancient story. Once, there was a small girl. Her name was Gauri. Her parents died when she was a small child of eight years. A rich trader at the village took care of her and accommodated her generously in his family, by providing her social support, shelter, clothing and food. Gauri helped the housemaid in the daily chores of washing clothes, sweeping the house and cleaning the courtyard of the family looking after her.

Once, she found a rusted coin dumped under the soil. It was a copper coin, heavy and rusted. She was overjoyed having found this new coin. She rinsed and cleaned it by rubbing mud, but the impression did not appear on the surface, yet she treasured the coin most carefully. The days and months passed and as and when she got some free time, she invested such happy moments by cleaning the coin to uncover the impression moulded on the surface of the coin, but her efforts were ultimately in vain.

Meanwhile, some Buddhist monks came there to collect donations from the village. The monks were collecting funds for moulding an image of Lord Buddha. The trader and other families donated money and ornaments in the begging bowls of the monks. The innocent girl ran happily to her room, opened her chest, took the rusted coin carefully and donated it in the begging bowl of the monks. A rusted coin dropped on the heap of glittering gold and silver. One of the monks looked at it furiously. He was angered by such mischief of the Girl. He picked up the coin and threw it angrily at the girl. The monk roared, "How dare you do this? O Girl! Are you not ashamed of putting such a dirty filthy coin as a donation for the holy image of Lord Buddha?" There were tears in the eyes of Gauri, trembling and shaken by such harsh and insulting words. She picked up the coin from the ground and with a heavy heart went back to her room to weep of her misfortune.

The proceeds of the donations were molten in a huge crucible over a powerful furnace and the bright and shining liquid was cast in a mould to form the image of Lord Buddha. The shimmering liquid settled and firmed in an

image of Lord Buddha. They broke the mould and took out the image of Lord Buddha from within it. But lo and behold! The image was ugly, shapeless and dull. All were shocked. Though the metals were gold and silver, sovereign and shining, the image moulded from that glittering liquid, was ugly and dark. The image was remoulded several times by melting the image repeatedly, but in each effort the image that resulted was ugly, dull and had no shine, or sparkle.

The disciple monks then went to their preceptor monk. The preceptor asked, "Have the donations been made happily by the people? Have you applied any force or pressure to extract the donations?"

The disciple saints thought seriously and then each of them declared truthfully that no pressure or force was applied to collect the donation from the people. They have donated it at their free will and with pleasure to serve in kind and in cash. But the preceptor was sure about such displeasure or pain of a devotee, as there was no other reason for the sorrow and grief appearing on the face of the image. Then he asked again his disciple monks, "Look. Think seriously and search your memory for any smallest donor who was displeased, pained or insulted by your arrogance or rudeness. It is for sure that someone has been pained and displeased by our way of begging for donations. The pain and displeasure of the aspirant is appearing on the face of the idol."

Then hastily a disciple submitted in anxiety, "O respected Guru! One small girl had tried to donate a small and rusty copper coin, but I had refused and rejected her donation rudely, by throwing away her rusty coin. O preceptor! I have pained and insulted her by my rude behaviour. O God! O Guru! Please forgive me."

The preceptor monk ordered, "You have refused and rejected a hearty gift of an innocent child. God is not in want of anything. God thirsts only for the faith, trust and devotional love of his devotees. Go back to her, pray for pardon and receive with honour the donation offered by her."

The disciple saints went back to her. Prayed collectively for pardon to their harsh behaviour and received with due honour the hearty gift of a rusty coin. Bala Gauri donated her hearty gift. The preceptor monk received it with divine pleasure and dropped the coin in the molten metal of the image, poured the liquid and remoulded the image. The molten metal settled properly after some time and from which appeared a most charming image of Lord Buddha, when they broke the mould to uncover the image. There was tranquil bliss and divine pleasure on the lotus-like face of Lord Buddha. The image was shining in the glitter of the gold and silver. The coin donated by Bala Gauri adorned the chest and heart of the image like the sparkle of a ruby. The devotees and aspirants were very pleased by the blissful smile spread on the lotus-like face of Lord Buddha. Bala Gauri was very happy on seeing her coin nestled lovingly at the heart of Lord Buddha. The donations made with faith and trust, are the

biggest and most precious of donations. Faith is the fruit of devotion. Do service of God with firmness of faith and trust.

(Grieve not on hearing about the pleasures of the sense objects. Those pleasures are like the *Udambar* fruit - a wild tree bearing inedible fruits)

The fruits of *Udambar* are inedible. Though born in plenty, by the tree, the fruits are not useful to people. If you look at the great tree of the Lokas – right from its stem to the top, you will find human beings, gods, deities, sun, moon, Indra and others imprisoned by the sense objects.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that if one thinks wisely, he finds things like death, accidents, theft and losses spread everywhere on the earth. No one is free from fear. There is no amnesty on the earth. Amnesty and fearlessness are available in the service submitted to God and saints.

Kadavun: 5

(Those saintly souls are very few, who are detached from worldly pleasures to do devotion of God.)

Elemental pleasures cannot be forsaken without detachment and asceticism. The saintly souls who love to serve devoutly at the lotus like feet of Shree Hari wear the saintly robe of detachment and by the weapon of asceticism they slay and kill delusion, *Maya* the eternal entity and worldly affection. The theme of *Saar Siddhi* is very interesting and stimulative. The scripture is full of detachment and asceticism.

The forces of *Maya* cannot deter the souls who are firm in detachment.

Seth Lakshmidas of Mathura was a very rich businessman. He had two faithful accountants helping him in his business. Both employees were honest and faithful. The wealth and money of Lakshmidas was safe in the hands of his accountants. Seth Lakshmidas was paying them a handsome salary to appreciate their honesty and selfless service.

The accountants knew about God's manifestation on the earth. They desired in their heart to leave Mathura to do *darshan* of Shree Hari at Gadhada Dhaam. They prayed to their master, "Sethji! We would like to depart this place and our assignment to do *darshan* of Shree Hari at Gadhada. We will leave this place forever to live a saintly life in the benign presence of Shree Hari.

Lakshmidas tried to retain their service by offering a big salary and perks. He praised their virtues and admired their value-oriented life. But the employees were firm in their decision. They simply rejected the allurements in a most humble way and admired the sympathy, love and courtesy of their master.

They submitted in utmost politeness, "Sir! Three or four fold salary is nothing for us. Not even your entire wealth would convince us. We have made up our mind to forsake ephemeral pleasures, wealth and world. We cannot stay here." Those who are matured in their detachment and asceticism cannot be held in the fragile ties of worldly allurements.

Both the employees left for Gadharpur in a holy pilgrimage and came to the abode of Lord Shree Hari at Gadhada Dhaam. They offered hearty salute at the lotus feet of Shree Hari and surrendered humbly at the refuge of Shree Hari. The eternal light of Shree Hari illuminated their hearts. They prayed, "O God! Please initiate us into sainthood." Shreeji Maharaj favoured them by initiating sainthood and new names were bestowed upon them: Ramanujanand and Bal Mukundji. God's divine pleasure strengthens the soul to reject the five sense objects. One cannot forsake the *panch vishayis* (five sense objects) without force and strength of asceticism and detachment.

(Penetrate the innermost and think meditatively. For sure you will have dialogue with the soul. The Gods and others all strive for the pleasures of the sense objects.)

Gods and demons, all strive for the five sense objects – ephemeral pleasures. They are neither happy nor satisfied with what they possess and strive undeterred to get more and more. They do nothing to please the Supreme Lord.

Seth Lakshmidas of Mathura was a very rich and wealthy businessman. Wealth and prosperity were at his disposal. He was a God fearing man. He built a monumental pillar of gold in the temple of God at Vrindavan. He offered donations and services to the poor and needy. But no man is perfect. People are not perfectly happy. There is always something missing in the life of man. If there is wealth, there will be no health or physical fitness. If physically fit, there will be no food for them. If healthy and wealthy there may be no progeny or male child!

Lakshmidas too was wealthy and rich. He lived a royal life, but was not happy bodily. Due to physical ailment, he was not able to consume sumptuous meals. If he had a heavy meal, his body was unable to bear it – digest it. He lived on a meal of handful of cooked rice – no salt no butter oil! Now think about the state of his life and the wealth at his disposal! Only God is the savour of our life, non others are. Badrinathji sings:

(Think and ponder wisely in the deepest depth of your heart. Nobody shall be of any help at the time of death. Stop conspiring and do devotion of God.)

Detachment is most powerful. It detaches the soul from the bodily and worldly ties. It disconnects the soul absolutely from the root and base. This detachment is the powerhouse of ascetic power. There are many episodes in our religious scriptures. Bhakta Narsinha Maheta of Junagadh was a devout householder. His wife Manek Mehti was a faithful wife and virtuous woman. They both lived happily with their son and daughter. Though there was love and affection for each other, Narsinha Maheta danced and sang happily with his *Kartal*, when he learned about the sad demise of his wife – Manek Maheti:

(It is good to break this householder relationship. There shall be more room for pleasure of devotion to God.)

This does not mean that there were social conflicts between them. The conflicts between husband and wife are a modern trend! Narsinha Maheta's was a happy family – happy and well united. Maheta was happy because, she walked to the abode of God. He was happy because there shall be more time for him to do devotion and service of God. He was freed from the ties of Maya. Such detached souls, though living as a householder, are always free and fully detached from the ties and allurements of worldly life – worldly relations.

That was from the life of a delusion-free devotee, but in the life of common householders, a husband weeps and laments profusely on the death of his wife or a relative. He can forget God, but can't forget his wife. But the *Muktas* (released souls) are unique in every walk of worldly life. The wealth of detachment maintains cleanliness of the soul.

(A philosopher's stone is like an enormous storehouse of pleasurable sense objects. Similarly, absolute detachment and asceticism is like a most powerful philosopher's stone – needing nothing further. Nothing is greater or more majestic than detachment).

One who receives the philosopher's stone in the form of detachment or asceticism is the most fortunate soul in the world. Know this well! Infinite pleasure resides in detachment and forsaking all else. The man who is the most possessive amongst the species, puts aside his spectacles when he sleeps at night. He sets aside everything of his householder chores, when he sleeps at night. He forests everything from his days work to sleep restfully at night. If he doesn't unload his mind and carries the burden of the pending assignments, commitments and worries, he shall have to spend a sleepless night by tossing and turning from either side of his bed. Renunciation and detachment is best for eternal peace.

Renunciation is not possible without detachment. This scriptures teaches us to maintain a 'Mother – Child' relationship with God. Normally, one cannot get a thing without asking for it, but God has given us everything without requisition – without asking for it! God has come to us without calling him! A mother comes to her child without calling her. She plays with her child and makes him happy by feeding and sustaining her young.

Like a good mother, God also helps us; he awakens us in the morning and gives food, livelihood and breath after breath of life.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Muni says that detachment or asceticism is the abode of majesty and wealth. A man needs nothing further, if he attains asceticism. Asceticism or detachment contains everything and by attaining it, one attains everything.

Detached souls are trouble free souls. They know the difference between the 'essence' and the 'nothingness'. The detached souls are like a *tumba* (an ascetic's pot made from the shell of a dried gourd). A *tumba* will not sink in the water. It will only stay sunk at the bottom whilst it is kept pressed with the hands, but no sooner as you remove the pressure, it will come up to float up to the surface. The saintly souls, detached or ascetics, never sink in the water of the elemental pleasures of the sense objects. Detachment is the kinetic force on our path of devotion. The worldly ties and the shackles of the sense objects cannot be destroyed without detachment. True devotees never succumb to the ephemeral pleasures of the sense objects.

Sadguru Adbhutanand Swami graced the town of Kanjdwari in his religious tour of Gujarat. He filtered the river water and took it in his ascetic's pot to quench his thirst. The king of the princely state saw this from the balcony of his palace. The king saw in him the virtues and attributes of a true saint. A detached soul surpasses the evil forces of Maya.

Respecting the virtues of the saint, the king sent his envoy and offered accommodation in his royal residence, surrounding the royal palace. They offered to him decent hospitality befitting a saintly soul. Sadguru Adbhutanandji spent the night at the royal guesthouse and concluded early morning rituals, did *poojan* and began to read Shikshapatri to please Lord Shree Hari. Meanwhile, the royal priest came there as he saw him reading and reciting a small scripture. He inquired with the saint about the holy book. Adbhutanand Swami explained to him the uniqueness of the pocket book of Shikshapatri and said that this was the essence of the four Vedas, Upanishads and the eighteen Puranas inclusive of Shreemad Bhagwat and Mahabharat. The royal priest liked his nectar like dialogue. He was very pleased with the knowledge, virtues and attributes of this saintly visitor.

The royal priest went to the king and admired the knowledge, wisdom and virtues of the royal guest. He opined that the unknown visitor was a great saint, holy and spiritually wise. The king agreed to the opinion of his royal priest and invited Adbhutanand Swami to grace the royal palace. Swami said, "O King! I am an ascetic. We live in recluse, away from women and wealth. Therefore, there should be no women at your palace at the time of my visit."

The king agreed to his restrictive condition and submitted, "O Saint! There shall be no woman at the palace during your visit."

Adbhutanand Swami graced the royal dwellings. The king helped him personally to grace the royal throne, and did *poojan-archan* by washing the lotus-like feet of Swami. He offered Sandalpaste and flower garland and presented *aarti* with the gift of gold embroidered attires with five hundred rupees in cash. Swami refused the cash gift and attires and asked him to distribute it amongst the poor in the state. Swami stayed there for some days by camping at the royal guesthouse and conducted satsang. The king too regularly attended *katha-varta satsang*. He was impressed by the virtuous attributes of the saint. He saw a most suitable groom in swami, for his princess. He thought to give away half of his kingdom to convince Swami to marry with his daughter.

The king then arranged a round the clock security to not allow Swami to leave the place. Swami learned about the security arrangements and inquired with the Prince about the same. The prince submitted humbly, "Swami! You are marrying tomorrow my sister." Such statement shocked Swami. He found in it an old trick of Maya's. He had once before left the marriage rituals to do devotion of God. Now, Maya was trying once again to shackle him in the ties of householdership. Swami got up early in the morning at 3.00 a.m. when the soldiers and guards were in a deep sleep and fled some sixty kilometres away from the state.

True devotees of God are not drawn into the illusive water of the five sense objects – Maya. Their heart and soul are pure. The utensils or containers made of any metal or material need to be cleansed periodically to remove dirt and impurity. If not done, dirt and impurity make it dirty. We human-beings have a heart – a golden heart! It needs to be cleansed regularly. If it gathers dirt, it shall not be able to hold the supreme virtues. Nishkulanand Swami says, "A devotee – a true devotee – should not look elsewhere for eternal pleasures. Pleasures and peace dwell forever in the divine image of Bhagwan. Detach yourself from the elemental world. There shall be pain always and everywhere, if you do not forsake the elemental world – householdership. Detachment is a must for devotion of God.

Kadavun - 6

(The God of Creation of the universe lost spiritual wisdom in absence of asceticism, and lost his senses in the alluring charms of his daughter – Saraswati. Moha lured Lord Shiva, due to his undetached mind.)

The sense objects drew Lord Shiva and Lord Brahma. Why? What was the cause of such decent? Both episodes are famous in the scriptures. Lord Mahadeva – Shiva - is God of the thirty-three *crore* deities, he is *Kala* of *Kala*. Such greats were lured by the charms of a woman, when they lacked detachment and asceticism. Charms and allurements are the obstacles on the holy path of devotion.

A released soul enjoys eternal pleasures

A person tied tightly to a pillar cannot go back to his house. He will need some one to untie him. The sense objects are the shackles of Maya. It stops the man in his journey to God. The weapon of detachment unties the man from the shackles of the sense objects and helps the man to realise God. The shackles, if not broken, block the path of devotion and such a devotee will think about money and wealth instead of God and devotional service. In devotion and *satsang*, his mind will roam in meals, eatables and other sense objects instead of devotion. Men will enjoy eternal pleasures of God, if freed from the shackles of affection and allurements, conspiracy and cunningness.

Indra – the king of heaven - lives an undetached life. He is not a recluse or ascetic. For his personal pleasure, he went to Rishi Dadhichi and begged for a bone from his ribs. Rishi Dadhichi was a benevolent saint. He donated the bone at the cost of his life, to wish good of others. Indra took the bone, made the thunderbolt (*Vajra*) weapon from it and killed Vratrasura to protect his kingdom of heaven.

Nishkulanand Swami talks further about Indra. Indra – though king of heaven – surrendered to his baser instincts and went to the hermitage of Rishi Gautam. He spoiled the chastity of Ahaliya and lost self-decorum in the eyes of God and deities. This would not have happened, if Indra had been a detached soul – an ascetic. Deities and Indra indulge relentlessly in the sense objects and ephemeral pleasures. The deities who have attained the status of demi-gods have attained such status by devotion and worship of God. They worshipped God when they were on the earth, but they forgot God and worship, when they ascended to heaven by the mercy of God! We are worshipping these deities, but these deities have stopped worshipping God in the absence of asceticism and detachment.

(Devoid of detachment, the moon went to the hermitage of a Rishi and ran away with the wife of the Rishi. Good and auspicious things are not possible without detachment.)

The moon acted like an amorous man and ran away with Tara – wife of Rishi Brihaspati. The moon was not detached. Rishi Brihaspati counselled him for his sinful act. To misbehave with a married woman is a sin. Brahma too counselled him in detail for his misconduct and appointed him as the Lord of the lunar mansions.

Man commits sinful acts in absence of detachment. Some of the sins are so great that the evil effects of those sins cannot be avoided even through penance, donation, *punyas* or *japas*. A detached soul never commits such sin.

.....
(The Sun God illuminates the world but the inner darkness of ignorance corrupts his wisdom. He never thought wisely, when he took a woman (Randal) as his wife without a marriage.)
.....

This act of the Sun God is most sinful. He is not married to Randal, but lives with her like a husband. This act of the Sun God shows the power and force of Maya.

(Narada, Parashara and Saubhari forgot the ultimate aim of devotion and meditational concentration, due to the lack of asceticism and detachment. Rishi Ekal Shreengi lost his sainthood due to receding asceticism and detachment.)

Saint Narada is known as the mind and wisdom of God. He is a spiritually wise scholar of the scriptures. He has authored the great scripture of 'Bhakti Sutras'. Jayanti – the princess daughter of emperor Ambarisha, tempted Rishi Narada. Narada being a foreseer and a good palmist studied the palm of Jayanti. Jayanti tempted his mind when he read her hand. He desired to marry her. Narada, over powered by his baser instinct, desired to the king, "O King Ambarisha! I wish to marry your daughter. Arrange by tomorrow the *Swayamvara* of her marriage."

Hundreds of the kings, princes and deities came to the *Swayamvara* to seek alliance with Jayanti – the prettiest princess of India. Saint Narada graced a prominent seat in the front row of the kings and deities. His heart was burning with desire whilst wisdom and asceticism had vanished in the fire of the baser instincts. He was impatient to wear the marriage garlands from Jayanti. Jayanti, escorted by a group of maid-servants, came to the *Swayamvara* to choose a

suitable groom. Passing by the princes, kings and deities in the row, she came nearer to Narada. Narada was sure about his selection as a groom, but Jayanti passed by the seat of Narada with a look cast at him and went ahead to see and interview other candidates. Narada was shocked by her attitude. On advice from his fellow candidate, he inspected the reflection of his face. He looked like an ugly animal, somewhat like a monkey! God saved him and his asceticism by transforming his face into an ugly animal. But Narada rebuked at the act of God and cursed him angrily; "You have played a trick to prevent my marriage to Jayanti. As a result, you will be separated from your wife Sitaji, to experience the agonies of separation. Loss of detachment creates such situations. Be detached and think wisely. Detachment is the only means to defeat carnal desires. Though capable of travel throughout the three lokas, Narad failed miserably in defeating his carnal desires. Detachment cannot survive without forsaking.

(Relinquishment cannot survive without detachment, despite all our efforts. The desires rooted deep in the heart cannot be forsaken easily. The change of dress and place are superficial even though he has become a saint by wearing a saffron robe of the sainthood and by leaving his homeland. These are on the surface, but in the innermost of his heart, there are desires and wishes wanting to be fulfilled. The seeds are not visible on the surface of the earth during the hot days of summer, but the showers of the monsoon change the scene and the forests of desires and wishes cover the barren surface of the earth. Here the seeds are unfulfilled desires; alluring sense objects are the rains that strengthen those carnal desires to grow aplenty.

Great Rishi Ekal Shreengi was succumbed to carnal desires in lack of detachment. The *katha* of Saar Siddhi acts like an alarm to warn the devotees. Devotion is rooted deep in detachment. Devotion with detachment is a must for the ultimate attainment.

(Undetached Chitraketu married hundreds of wives. Agnindhra and Yayati were at a spiritual loss due to their undetached living.)

King Chitraketu was a great king of a very large empire. He was the mightiest amongst the kings and wealthiest in the world. Though he was married to hundreds of women, there was no progeny born to him. There was no heir to maintain his lineage and dynasty. He left no stone unturned to get a male child, but all efforts were in vain.

Rishi Narada graced the palace of the king. King Chitraketu did *poojan archan* of Narada and prayed for a male child. Great saint Narada read his future and pronounced that there was no child in his destiny. He should not insist for a child. But worldly soul Chitraketu insisted persistently for the progeny to maintain his lineage and dynasty. According to him, power, majesty and wealth were to end with him at the end of his life. The name of his lineage and dynasty, with his own fame were to be wiped out from the history of the royal families and noble dynasty, if a male child was not born to his family. Narada explained to him that it was impossible to change the course of nature and the judgement of God. The king then asked him to counter the judgement of God by his divine powers to give a male child to continue the lineage, and empire.

Submitting to King Chitraketu's request, with the help of Angira Rishi, he offered a bowl of sacred water from *pooja* and asked Chitraketu to offer that water to his queen, to drink it. Narada then advised the king, "O Chitraketu! Your queen will give birth to a male child. Name that child as Harshashoka!"

King Chitraketu followed the orders of Narada and asked his principal queen to drink the water. She drank it and at an appropriate time, gave birth to a male child. Following the instruction of Narada, the prince was named Harshashoka. The King and the subjects were very happy.

But all was not well. The hundred wives of King Chitraketu were not so happy with the birth of the heir. They found themselves ignored and insecure in comparison to the queen mother. They conspired together to change the present equation by killing the infant prince. The death of the child would bring the mother down to the level of the rest of the queens!

King Chitraketu was attending the court everyday after playing with his son in the morning. This was his daily schedule. One day he forgot to play with his child and went to the royal court. Here the jealous queens schemed and poisoned the child - the princely heir of the kingdom. The child died in the cradle.

The queen mother came to feed her son. She took the son on her lap, but the son would not awaken. She cried and lamented in unbearable grief. The king rushed back to the queen's suite and wept in tears of grief. Their life was ruined by destiny. Their only son was killed by someone. Narada and Angira arrived back to the king in their return journey. King Chitraketu saluted them and narrated the sad demise of his worthy son. The king prayed, "O Great Ascetic! I am even unhappier than I was before. My only son is dead."

Narada said, "O King! I had told you before, the child shall be nothing but a bundle of happiness and grief. His birth brought happiness and pleasure in your life, and his death has drowned you in the ocean of grief and sorrow. O King! The world is like a nest. In accordance to the *karmas* and *punyas* of the past life, people and relatives meet in the present life, and separate accordingly. It is

not within the reach of human beings. Therefore, stop crying and remember God.”

The king prayed, “O Rishi! Kindly help me at least once to listen to the child-like whispers of my darling child. Just one chance! I will not insist for further favour. Please bless me with this opportunity.”

Narada prayed to Shree Hari and sprinkled sacred water on the dead body. The child awoke from the sleep of death and said, “O Father! Why are you crying so much on my death? I am not your son and you are not my father. There had been many births in past, where I have been your father and you as my son. Life, death and relatives are nothing but the fruits of our past *karmas* of earlier births. The soul leaves a body on settling the account of his *karmas*. The world and worldly relations are like the nest of a bird.”

Devout Poetess Mirabai sings:

(The world and the relatives are like a nest of a bird. Do devotion of God. We are together due to our past *karmas* and our past debts to others. The present life is a fruit of the past birth. We came to the earth empty-handed and leave it empty handed at the time of death. This is the illusive sport of Maya, and our bodies are vulnerable like a water bubble. Life ends abruptly without any advance notice. None accompany a departing soul and none will accompany us in our death. All are walking on their own paths, scattering and separating like the clouds. Devout poetess Mirabai asks us to do devotion of God during the precious life as a human being.)

The infant prince then said to king Chitraketu - his father, “O Father! You shall be emancipated, if with similar love and affection you did devotion of God. Withdraw your mind from me and attach it to God for your ultimate benediction.” The Child then forsook his elemental body and ascended to the divine abode.

King Chitraketu forsook his worldly relations, kingdom and wives like an ascetic and retired to the seclusion of the forest to do penance and devotion.

Swami now narrates the story of Agnindhra. Agnindhra did great penance and performed meditational concentration to realise God. One heavenly damsel came to his hermitage to lure Agnindhra by her beauty and charm. The sweet and intoxicating jingle of her anklets broke the meditational concentration of Agnindhra and he awoke from his *samadhi* state. He fell in love with the heavenly damsel and abandoned the penance and meditation. He married her and produced children. After some time, the Apsara (the heavenly

damsel) went back to heaven. Agnindhra resumed again the penance and meditation, but not with an intention to realise God and God's pleasure. He did it to satisfy his carnal desires. As a fruit of his penance, meditation and *vrata*, he was given admission to the heaven to be with the heavenly damsel! His mind lost contact with God, due to his concentration in the charms of the heavenly damsel!

King Yayati was loved by his subjects. He was a wise and kind-hearted monarch. Despite these virtuous attributes, he was a slave of his carnal desires. He was married to Sharmishta, but to satisfy his carnal desires, he married again to Devyani. Conflicts and quarrels took place between the king and his two queens. The second queen Devyani was the daughter of Shukracharya - a great hermit and Guru of the demons. She complained to his father about the partial love of Yayati. Shukracharya cursed the king Yayati for his lesser love to Devyani. Shukracharya snatched away his youth and made him old. Yayati lost his youthful vigour. He became old and weak. His body trampled on support of a walking stick. His eyes went deep into the hollows of his eye sockets. His skin clung to his skeleton. His toothless mouth became like a deep burrow. Bent like a bow, he walked on the support of his walking stick. However carnal desires would not recede with the weakening of his body. Though old, weak and vulnerable, King Yayati was burnt in the fire of sensual pleasures and carnal desires.

He went to his father-in-law, Rishi Shukracharya and prayed most humbly, "O Guru! O Father! I am burning in the fire of unfulfilled carnal desires. Old age and bodily weakness has deprived me of carnal pleasures. I am not able to enjoy sense objects. Please be kind to me."

Shukracharya said, "O King Yayati! My curse cannot be revoked, but there is a way to soften it. You have four sons. They can gift you their youth and in return, they must accept your old age. Thus, you may enjoy youthful life with the help of your sons."

Desires are eternally youthful. Desires do not recede in old age or in the weakening of the body. King Yayati - a slave of carnal desires - went to his sons to beg for their youth. His eldest son refused to give his youthful vigour, and said, "Why do you want our youth? What are you to do with it in your old age? Better you do devotion. I will not part with my youth."

Yayati then spoke to his second son and asked him to give his youth. His son thought that the desires were like witches stuck to the soul, birth after birth. The soul enjoys birth after birth the desired objects, but they never satisfy his thirst of the carnal desires. Old age is most suitable time of life to do devotion of God. He thought, to give away his youth to his father in lieu of old age.

Those *Rishis*, saints and kings did devotion and penance on the earth, but they did it without detachment. If devotion is not attached to detachment, it doesn't bring the desired virtuous rewards.

(One cannot be satisfied by the sense objects and carnal desires. The sense organs are too deep and large to fill it with the water of the carnal desires. This world is like a dream.)

These episodes are not meant to speak bad about saints and devotees. These episodes are meant to guide the saints and devotees and to alarm them against the evil powers of carnal desires. Those Rishis and kings were great devotees of God. They were wise and majestic. They had tried their best to defeat carnal desires, but were not successful to do so in absence of detachment. They were helpless to act so.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami alarms us by this sacred book of Saar Siddhi. The book is with one singular aim of augmenting detachment and asceticism in the hearts of faithful devotees.

Right from tiny insects to the greats like Brahma, all are vulnerable prey of carnal desires. Therefore a devotee of God should take extra care.

(The heart will not repel the carnal desires in absence of detachment. The wounds of carnal desires shall not be healed without detachment.)

Tilak Chandlo

Even the most charming sense objects will not tempt the mind if detachment and asceticism are augmented to strengthen the soul.

Becharbhai of Prantij went to Vijapur for some personal work. He travelled on foot by road to reach Vijapur. Those were hot summer days, lonely for a traveller like Becharbhai Bhagat. He travelled half way in the afternoon and entered a small forest near a river while singing devotional songs to please Lord Shree Hari. Becharbhai was a satangi of Shree Swaminarayan Bhagwan. As he walked further, some thieves confronted and threatened him, "Hey you Bhagat! We will kill you if you do not surrender your *Kanathi* (necklace like rosary of fine beads) and *Chandlo* (a symbolic print of sandalpaste). Hurry and relinquish them!"

Becharbhai was a faithful and trustworthy devotee of Lord Shree Hari. He retorted firmly, "You may kill me, if desired to do so. I am not to leave my *Kanathi* and *Chandlo*. I am not praying for my life, and not afraid of your threats. Continue ahead as per your plans!" The tone and firmness scared the thieves to run away from there.

After some time, he found a woman blocking his path. By her sweet voice, she asked him to stop. Becharbhai went near her. The beautiful woman said to him, "Bhagat! Listen to me. I will gift you one hundred gold coins if you remove your *Kanathi* and *Chandlo*. Set aside this fellowship and live a happy life

with this wealth. There shall be no need to earn livelihood for the rest of your family life. Goddess of wealth herself has knocked on your door to shower wealth and prosperity.”

Bechar bhagat replied, “O Beautiful Lady! What will I do with the wealth of others? It is of no use to me. I don’t need that much of wealth. Let it stay with you. I need only my God.”

Bhagat walked forward towards Vijapur, pondering on the strange events involving thieves and a beautiful lady. When he thought further to solve the riddle Lord Shree Hari appeared in front of him. Shreeji Mahaaj said, “Bhagat! What are you thinking about? Don’t be afraid of them. Those thieves were the Yama Dootas and the woman you saw was none other than Maya. They tried to scare you to leave the path of devotion and tempt you by the wealth of carnal pleasures.”

Moha (delusion), *Mamata* (affection) and *Vishayis* (senses objects) cannot attract a detached soul. The wounds of carnal pleasure shall not heal without the blissful touch of detachment!

Kadavun : 7

(Carnal desires recede on augmentation of asceticism and detachment. Unbroken detachment resides where the heart and the mind dwells in Lord Shree Hari and His divine leelas.)

The carnal pleasures appear repulsive when detachment and asceticism increases. The mind and the soul dwell eternally in Shree Hari when there is dislike for carnal desires. The colour of detachment is fast and bright. It cannot be removed easily. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami describes here the true colour of devotion and detachment.

(Shukji and Jada Bharata were born *yogis* - detached souls. They were true ascetics and well-matured recluses.)

Shukdevji was a born *yogi*. As an unborn child, he received ultimate knowledge in his mother's womb. He spent twelve years in the womb of his mother without birth. His father - Veda Vyasa said, "My son! Your mother cannot bear such pain. Please exit from your mother's womb and step upon this earth."

Shukdevji replied from the mother's womb, "Respected father! I am not a burden to my mother. I am less than a flower in weight. I do wish to leave my mother's womb, but *Maya* prevents me from doing so. I am afraid of *Maya*. *Maya* has caused many to fall from their path of penance and devotion. Many great Rishis have suffered at the hands of *Maya*. Please withdraw *Maya* for a fraction of a second for my birth to proceed."

His father Vyasa withdrew *Maya* by his Yogic power and Shukdevji manifested himself instantly from the womb of his mother. His father tried his best to keep his son with him, but Shukdevji ran away instantly to the seclusion of the forests. He retired into the deep forest and did penance.

As time passed, Bhagwan Veda Vyasa desired to teach his Bhagwata to a suitable disciple. Many souls may be benedicted by such expansion of ultimate knowledge. Shukdevji was a most suitable disciple to learn the knowledge of Shreemad Bhagwata, but it was very difficult to call him back from the deep forest. Muni Veda Vyasa taught a few *shlokas* of Bhagwata to a selected group of his disciples and sent them to the deep corners of the forest to chant those *shlokas* sweetly in the seclusion of the forest. They penetrated the deep areas of the forest while chanting these *shlokas* of Shreemad Bhagwata. These chants of ultimate knowledge broke the meditational trance of Shukdevji. Shukdevji returned to the waking state and searched for the saints who chanted the *shlokas*

of ultimate knowledge. Shukdevji asked, "Who are you? From where have you learnt this? Who is your Guru?"

The disciple said, "I am a disciple ascetic. I have learnt these shlokas from my teacher (Guru) - Rishi Veda Vyasa."

Shukdevji returned to his father without further delay to learn Shreemad Bhagwata, authored by his enlightened father. He learnt Shreemad Bhagwata and preached his first *parayan* at the banks of the holy river Ganga. He recited this *Katha* for seven days and led King Parikshita onto the path of ultimate salvation. Rishi Shukdevji lived at the spiritual plane - without knowledge of his elemental body.

In his past birth, Jada Bharat was the emperor of India. India was named *Bharata-Varsha* on account of the virtuous name of King Bharat. Bharatji forsook his kingdom, wealth, power and householdership to do penance and devotion in the seclusion of the forest. He built a small hut on the banks of river Ganga and did penance and meditation there to realise God. However, due to an elderly affection for the young of a deer, great recluse Bharat was himself reborn as a deer. In his life as a deer, he held perfect memory of his past birth as a king-turned-recluse, but had no option but to behave like an animal. Then in his following birth, he was born to a Brahmin family. Though fully enlightened by the knowledge of the past births, he preferred to behave like a dumb mute and kept himself away from the allurements of Maya by living like a madman. The people, therefore, knew him as 'Jada-Bharat'. While carrying a palanquin, he was recognised by King Rahugan. He then preached ultimate knowledge for the ultimate emancipation of King Rahugan.

(Detached soul Prahaladji never desired for worldly pleasures. Kuntaji was a true devotee of Lord Shree Krishna. Vidura forsook his kingdom for devotion of God.)

Lord Nrisimha manifested himself to protect his devotee Prahlad. Lord Nrisimha asked him to request a boon. Devout Prahlad prayed, "O Lord! Please protect me from my inner enemies. I need nothing except this."

Lord Shree Krishna said, "O Dear Aunt! Please receive a boon from me. I am here to fulfil your wishes."

Kuntaji replied, "O Krishna! Give me suffering during each step of my life."

Bhima, who stood beside her, thought that his mother was not clever at requesting a boon. It would have been far better if *Ladus* were begged in that boon!

Lord Shree Krishna answered, "O Dear aunt! People in the world beg for pleasures in their life, but you have begged for suffering! Why?"

“O Keshava! Your remembrance is far more during times of suffering than in the days of pleasure and happiness. I want never to forget you!”

True definitions of real wealth and actual poverty are quite different.

Remembrance of God is real wealth. Forgetting God is true poverty.

(Such pleasures are of no use, if through which we forget God. Such suffering is praiseworthy, through which we remember God.)

That wealth is meaningless if we forget God by such wealth. But those pains should be treated like wealth, if through which we remember God. Vidura was the son of the King and was also entitled to the kingdom. He forsook royal power and wealth to do pilgrimage and devotion. He lived in the forest and did penance like an ascetic - a detached soul.

(Gopichand, Bhartruhari, Bajand, Sabasta, Barej, Mansur and others like them were true detached souls. They were not succumbed to the allurements of Maya)

Queen mother Menavati said to her son, “Gopichand! My Son! Your father was strong, powerful and valorous like you, but inevitable doom took him like a morsel in a predators jaws. He had all this wealth, power, kingdom, relatives and welwishers and yet nothing went with him. Death is inevitable. It is a most lonely journey; worldly pleasures will not accompany you. If you desire to be immortal and to stop this wheel of life and death, you must forsake everything, walk away to the forest, live in seclusion and do devotion. Worldly pleasures are ephemeral. True happiness and eternal pleasures are really only in the service of God.”

She enlightened her son Gopichand in this way. He heeded such words and forsook the kingdom and retreated to the forest immediately. Ultimately, great ascetic Gopichand ascended to the divine abode of God through his unbroken faith and devotion.

Bajand was a king. He was a kind-hearted king. He loved his subjects and took good care of them through his personal visits of the state capital, towns and villages. Once during a visit he found a dead camel as it lay across the road. The king ordered his retinue to move forward, but the horse riders submitted politely, “O My Lord! There is a dead camel laid on the road. All the vehicles have stopped near it.”

The king was surprised by such submission. “What was a death?” He never knew of it. The king came to the palace to find out what they meant by ‘death’. He saw the camel. It’s eyes, ears, nose, legs all were perfectly fit. The body of the camel was in good shape. Then why did they say it was dead? He inquired with his royal guard. His bodyguard said, “Maharaj! The body is perfectly fit but there is no soul to operate the body. As there is no soul, it is

dead." The king was shocked by this bitter fact of death. All have to die in like manner. It is inevitable.

The king then inquired about ways and means to counter death, to overpower it. "There are indeed means and ways to overcome death. Do devotion of God. God will save you. God will protect you. God will stop the cycle of death and birth. Surrender to God." King Bajand forsook worldly relations in favour of absolute detachment, went to the forest and did devotion.

We witness many deaths during our life, but hardly ever think about them. The virtues like detachment and asceticism are very difficult to imbibe.

King Bhartruhari loved his queen Pingla. But queen Pingla was not a virtuous woman. She was not faithful to her husband. She betrayed her husband and established illicit relations with other men. King Bhartruhari knew about her unlawfulness. He forsook worldly relations, and retired to the seclusion of the forest, did penance and became a great ascetic.

Detachment breaks the shackles of affection and allurements. Shekh, Sabast, Barej and Mansoor were great Muslim saints and detached souls. They pleased God by unbroken devotion and faith. Detachment is the ultimate goal of human life.

Kadavun : 8

(Worldly wealth is like a sin for a detached soul. He never looks at wealth. All pleasures, except the image of Maharaj, are painful for him.)

A detached soul considers wealth as a perennial source of pains. For him, God is the eternal source of pleasure. If the soul desires eternal happiness, he should detach himself from the sense objects. This is the core of the teachings. Sadguru Devanand Swami sings:

(Do devotion and love God. One has to give away his wealth at the time of death. There shall be no relations at the time death. Elemental happiness and worldly pleasures are like a dream – short and unreal. There shall be no relatives at the time of death.)

All have to die - none are immortal. But nobody is ready to accept the truth of death. Life is uncertain in every moment. It has become a cause of constant labour. Nobody tries to please the supreme saviour – the perennial source of amnesty and eternity. This shows our ignorance. The soul is agile like a monkey.

False pride cannot stand in front of God

Lord Shreeji Maharaj dwelled permanently at Gadhada to emancipate his faithful devotees. Satsangis used to come to Gadhada to do darshan of Shreeji Maharaj. Shreeji Maharaj was gracing the homes of the devotees to give them devotional pleasure. Thus, the people lived happily in the benign fold of Shreeji Maharaj. But as an exception, there was a duo of Patels. Those Patel brothers decided firmly, not to see the face of Shreeji Maharaj. They knew that all the people worshiped Shreeji Maharaj as God, but they were not ready to accept Shree Swaminarayan as the divine form of God. If they saw Shreeji Maharaj in a street or a road in front of them, they turned their faces and shut their eyes to avoid sight of him. At times they avoided Shree Hari by shielding their eyes or by hiding themselves in a dark corner of the street.

Shreeji Maharaj took note of those two Patels. The ten thousand strong population of Gadhada did his darshan, but those two Patels opposed him. Shreeji Maharaj desired at his free will to bless them by giving darshan. Once, the Patels loaded the cottonseeds on their bullock carts to transport it to a nearby town, through a narrow village road. Halfway through their long journey, they saw Shree Hari and Sura Khachar afar on the opposite side of the road. They were rushing to them in clouds of dust. Such sudden happenings shocked both the Patels. What do they do now? Shreeji Maharaj was to approach them soon! The road was very narrow and deep. There was no scope for diversion. They climbed up on the cart and like a dog, dug a deep burrow in the heap of cottonseeds. They hid their faces in the burrow. Shreeji Maharaj saw them trapped in their own ill thinking, and found it an appropriate time to benedict them.

Shreeji Maharaj jumped onto the cart and pulled out their hands and their faces from the cottonseeds and said, "You fools! Have I harmed you ever? Why do you not see my face?" In such confusion and commotion, they looked unknowingly at Shree Hari to listen to his speech. As soon as they saw him, they slipped into an instant meditational trance. They saw there the loka of Yama (God of death) and saw the ferocious *Yama-Dootas*. The Yama-Dootas chased them to beat them with their heavy clubs. They seized them mercilessly and punished them with a thorough beating.

These loathsome souls returned to waking state and wept profusely at the lotus feet of Lord Shree Hari, "O Lord! O God! Forgive us. Please save us from our sins. We surrender at your lotus feet."

Now they realised the truth and the divine powers of Lord Shree Hari. Their false pride and vanity vanished by the grace of God. They prayed for acceptance into the Satsang. Shreeji Maharaj sanctified them with the *Panchvartmaan* and initiated *mantra-deeksha* to accept them into Satsang. Shreeji Maharaj took them in his benign fold of Satsang by tying a fine rosary around their neck and preached to them the religious rules of this axiomatic religion.

The Patels then submitted, "Maharaj! It is nice of you to take us in your benign Satsang even after a thorough beating by the Yama-doots. There would have been no end to the agonies had we not been shielded by you. Maharaj! Please don't ever leave us. Kindly keep hold of us forever."

Maharaj said to them, "Even a ghost doesn't leave a possessed man, than how shall I do it as God? Both the Patels did devotion and became most faithful Satsangis of Shree Hari. Lord Shree Hari was very pleased with them.

Great and supreme are those who did devotion of God:

(Food grains boil rapidly in boiling water, up and down on the flaming fire of the cooking stove. The souls of various categories burn and boil constantly in the boiling water of the *Panch-Vishayas* (five sense objects).)

The food grains boil and jump with the boiling water kept in a cooking pan on a flaming stove. The world is that cooking pan and the souls are the food grains. These souls are boiling constantly in the water of desire on a fire of the three kinds of pains. There is no end to such toremment, without detachment and asceticism.

(Life and efforts are futile without detachment. Pleasant looking things are not always virtuous and good. A poisonous plant should not be planted in the courtyard of a house, merely by virtue of its charms.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Muni says: Plant not a poisonous tree in your courtyard. It bears no edible fruits. If the fruits were to be eaten, the poison would surely draw away your life. Its poison will surely kill you. Poison and enmity should not be nursed. Poison will kill you and enmity will not allow you to remember God. Enmity possesses our memory, and leaves no room for God or devotion. But Sadguru Brahmanand Swami has a surprising opinion for this enmity.

According to Sadguru Brahmanand Swami, enmity is beneficial in certain circumstances. This world is full of vices, illusion and conspiracy of every kind. Enmity toward *Kama* (carnal desires), *Krodha* (anger), *Moha* (delusion), *Maya* (eternal entity), *Aasha* (wishes) and *Trishna* (desires) shall be beneficial for the soul. These are the real enemies, the inner enemies. They live within the innerself to destroy us by their sinful means. Treat them as your enemy. There should be no enmity between men. Inner enemies stay away only when we remove enmity towards others. It is a natural phenomenon. We never look at our enemy. Similarly, the inner enemies will not look at us, if we treated them as our enemies.

To realise God through single-minded devotion, is the singular aim and cardinal teaching of this scripture – *Saar Siddhi*. Set aside all else and do devotion of God. Don't respect your inner enemies, crush them and oust them.

(Man forgets God and applies all available means to live happily. But it is a most harmful attitude. Man should act wisely.)

It is a shocking surprise that man has no time! He has no free time! There is no leisure in western lifestyle, despite lots of wealth, pleasures and means! No leisure means no peace of mind. Though living in a small family, they have no time to have a full family dinner or such a lunch. No time to sit together! They are lost in the toxic magic of Maya. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that the detached souls forsake false pleasures to do devotion of God. These are the true detached souls.

Pada : 2

(Act like an absolutely detached soul. Do selfless service of God. Don't beg for worldly pleasures. Don't be drawn by delusion.)

True devotees are detached souls. They never beg for worldly pleasures. The soul will not be satisfied through worldly pleasures. If begot a son, he will desire thereafter for a grand son. If he has money, he will long then for wealth and property. Thus, the desires are endless – infinite.

A spider builds a huge cobweb by investing all its labour, but the owner of the house destroys it instantly with a stroke of his broom. Similarly, a man invests his lifetime labouring and creating wealth and assets to boast about, but the merciless destiny destroys it totally by the stroke of death! Therefore, be aware of the perishable pleasures and illusive delusions.

(God likes the services offered by a selfless devotee. Such detached devotees are desire-free, they beg not for even Moksha. They stick to their virtuous habit.)

God loves his desire-free devotees. God likes them and accepts their services.

Unselfish love compells God to request a meal

Shreeji Maharaj graced the village of Bhandar and came to the house of his devotee – Pataliabhai. Pataliabhai was not at home, but his wife was there to take good care of the guests. One feels happy to request a meal, if there is love and respect. Shreeji Maharaj said to her, "I am hungry. Give me something to eat."

The devout lady lost her sense in the surge of devotional love and in place of milk she brought a bowl of sour buttermilk. Shree Hari drank it with love. Meanwhile, Pataliabhai came there. He saluted Shree Hari and sat at the lotus feet of God. He prayed, "Maharaj! Please grace our place with an overnight stay. You may leave tomorrow. Please favour us by your consent."

Maharaj said, "I will stay here in my next visit. I would like to leave now."

Pataliabhai said, "Maharaj! As you please. I will travel with you."

"Pataliabhai, you have just come from a long journey. You must be tired and hungry. Therefore have your meal and join me later on."

Pataliabhai sat to have his meal and asked his wife to bring some milk to drink. As soon she went and took the milk container, she realised that the bowl she offered to Shree Hari was not the milk, but was a bowl of sour buttermilk. She regretted immensely the big blunder she had made. She came back hurriedly and apologized, "Maharaj! I am mad. I had offered you extremely sour buttermilk, instead of milk. Please pardon me for my blunder."

Shreeji Maharaj said, "Sister! You had offered it with subtle feelings of devotional love by bringing it as milk and therefore I had tasted milk in that sour buttermilk. Don't worry. I hunger not of anything else."

God is hungry for your devotional feelings. It is not important what has been presented to God, but important are the devotional feelings behind such submission.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, "Shree Hari parts ways with undetached devotees. God knows that such a devotee begs for sense objects in lieu of his small service. God dislikes such slaves of sense objects. God is the all-knower. He knows everything about his devotees. He gives to them without them having to beg anything. God is pleased by the service and devotional love. Forsake *Dambha* (hypocrisy), *Kapata* (conspiracy) and *Swartha* (selfishness). Do devotion without any desire.

Kadavun : 9

(I praise the lifestyle of the detached soul. The pleasures of *maya* are all equal to him. Such souls are not tempted by worldly pleasures. Their minds are attached firmly to the lotus feet of Lord Shree Hari.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami narrates here the virtues and attributes of detached souls. Swami praises them profoundly. The detached souls have adhered firmly to Lord Shree Hari's lotus feet. Their mind is not diverted towards worldly pleasures.

(They are not sorry for untasty meals. They have whatever they get. They have dry, tasteless, tasty or any kind of eatables to pass the day.)

Swaminarayan Bhagwan has taught his disciples to discipline the sense of taste. The saints practise such oath. Saints are not allowed to eat salty, sour, hot or sweet foods. They are supposed to have simple meals.

Nand Sants were used to collecting *Bhiksha* (begging). They collected Bhiksha in a cloth and dipped such container in the water to submit the taste to *Jaladevata* (deity of water). They consumed tasteless meals. Simple food maintains physical and mental health. Devotees of God should not eat tasty food. They should eat simple meals of *Roti*, *Daal* and vegetables cooked at home with lesser spices. One should subsist on consuming Roti and buttermilk if *Daal* or vegetables are not available. Eat with solace and content, without any fuss.

Don't show off by wearing impressive attires. Wear simple and decent clothes. Don't spend more than your earning capacity. Be reasonable and wise in money matters. Don't stretch yourself to the level of misery. The man longing for tastes and luxuries invites self-destruction.

Our Lord Shree Hari, in his celibate life as Nilkanth Varni, had passed days and months without any comfort of a carpet or pillow and slept at night on open land or a slab of stone.

This scripture propounds and preaches asceticism and detachment. It describes the lifestyle of a true ascetic. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami himself is an idol of asceticism and detachment.

(People may criticize or not salute him with respect or may not give even food to eat, or hurl stones and cowdung on his house. But a true detached soul should be happy in all such circumstance without any grudge).

A true detached soul is not bothered about the world. A salute or an insult, both are equal to him without any pleasure or pain. If saluted by some one, he considers it as a salute to God. He is not touched by it.

Don't Colour yourself in the colours of the world

Great ascetic Eknathji did a pilgrimage of southern India and came to the holy shrine of Shree Rang Kshetra. Sacred River Kauveri flows by the side of Shree Rang Kshetra. Eknathji Maharaj went to the river for morning bath. Four youths were standing by the roadside near the river. They saw this old Sadhu returning to the temple after a holy dip in the river. The saint was an idol of solace and peace. The youths thought him to be a pretender in disguise of a peaceful saint and thought to test him to determine his nature and temperament.

Those fools never knew that true saints are beyond such tests. They cannot be tested. But the unleashed youth of all ages and contemporary world,

insult elders and saints by their mischievous acts. Those young men desired to test Eknathji of his patience and compassion. According to them, Eknathji was a pretender and if repeatedly insulted, he would show his true colour by hurling harsh words in anger, befitting a wayside mendicant. One amongst those youths, spitted on Eknathji when the old man passed by them. Eknathji spoke nothing, remembered God at his heart, went back to the river to have a bath and walked back to the temple. But as soon he passed by that group of ill-mannered youth again, the same youth spitted again on him and spoiled his physical purity. Calm and cool Eknathji returned to the river, had again ritual bathing and proceeded to the temple. But these youths were bent upon exposing his inherent nature and baser instincts. They spitted repeatedly to send the saint back to the river again and again - one hundred and eight times in fact, but Eknathji performed *Japa* and *Snan* most religiously without any anxiety or anger, while chanting silently the holy hymns and names of God.

Repeated *darshan* of the true saint enlightened the hearts of the miscreant youths. They were very sorry for their sinful acts, when they compared it to the solace and compassion of the great saint. They cried in repentance when they thought about what they had done, the saint has paid in hunger and without *pooja* to sanctify himself through repeated holy dips in the river. It was a most sinful act on their part.

Those youths ran to the saint and surrendered at his holy feet to pardon them. They prayed with humble salute, "O Holy man! O Enlightened saint. Please forgive us for our misbehaviour. We have tormented you by our ugly acts. We had compelled you to repeatedly and rudely spend half of the day in walking and bathing. You have missed *poojan* and meal due to our sinful behaviour. With solace and compassion you bore our misbehaviour. You are an ocean of compassion and bliss. We salute you humbly to pardon our sinful behaviour by an appropriate punishment. Beat us by your wooden footwear. Punish us for our sins!"

Saint Eknath said with compassion, "Don't worry my sons. You have not committed any sin. You have obliged me by your virtue-oriented ways. This is my first pilgrimage of southern India and it was decided by me to have a sanctifying dip in the sacred river Kauveri. You have favoured me by affording me ample chance to have one hundred and eight holy dips in the sacred river. You are my real friends and well-wishers. How can I punish you?"

The youths were thrilled by the intensity of selfless love. They embraced Eknathji Maharaj with devotional love and prayed in submission, "O Great Guru! O Rishi! You have awakened us from the slumber of ignorance and ego. You have freed us from our inner enemies. We pray to you to receive us as your disciples. We will live with you to learn of the devotional ways of worship."

Thus, they benedicted themselves through devotion and service to God.

A true saint sanctifies sinners. A true saint lives unperturbed amidst praise and criticism. They are merged in the inner most, not noticing the world. They are not disturbed by the ways of atheists.

An aspirant of Satsang would do anything and everything to attain it

A true aspirant tolerates and bears all kind of pains, praises, insults and sorrows to attain Satsang and God.

(Hunger finds no fault in a meal)

A hungry man eats anything and everything. Younger saints feel hungry more often.

Once, during a religious tour of Jamnagar, Adbhutanand and Swaroopanand Swami with a group of the saints were camped at the Doli-Pond of Jamnagar. The saints were hungry, Adbhutanand Swami submitted to Swaroopanand Swami and sought permission to lick the salty clods from the pond. They were hungry since many days past, and were now compelled by hunger to satisfy their hunger by licking mud clods. Swami said, "Okay. You may lick the clods." They spent four days in this way licking salty mud-clods. On the fifth day they got some flour through *Bhiksha* (begging). They consumed balls made of flour and did *Bhajan-Kirtan* at the banks of the pond.

Jam Sahib – King of Jamnagar state – passed by the pond side. He saw those saints. He inquired with his security officer about the saints. The officer reported, "Sir! Those are saints of Shree Swaminarayan. The merciful king inquired about their food and dwelling and found that they lived by begging from the town folk. Jam Sahib went to the saints and invited them to the palace to have meals. Swaroopanand Swami said with compassion, "O King! We feel honoured by your hearty invitation, but we are very sorry to submit that we are not allowed by our preceptor to accept such invitations. Jam Sahib was much insistent, but the saints rejected his repeated requests politely. Then the king prayed for a means to offer *bhiksha* to the suitable saints. Swami said, "O King! Please donate food grains to our saints when they come to the town for their routine begging." The King was very happy with the reply of the saint.

The saints went to the town to collect *bhiksha*. The royal servants were posted at every house with food grains, *ghee*, sugar and condiments to donate to the saints. When the saints begged *bhiksha*, the royal servants went with them carrying sacks and containers of food grains, *ghee* and condiments. They kept it at the inn for the saints. The saints cooked meals from it to present *thaal* to please Lord Shree Hari. They spent six days in this way by presenting *thaal* and having sumptuous meals. Swaroopanand Swami then said to the saints, "O Saints! These days we are being respected a lot more with plentiful meals given to us in *bhiksha*; therefore, we should now leave this place."

Think about their detachment and tolerance. They have sacrificed a lot to lay a strong foundation for this Satsang. They had spent days and weeks by

consuming stale reddish leaves. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami praises such detached saints – true ascetics:

(I admire the saints who bore pleasures and pains of the world. They are unparalleled in their detachment.)

These saints are true ascetics. They bare pains and pleasures as a detached soul. Their detachment and asceticism are unique.

(Legendary mount Meru may tremble, but the mind of a true satsangi shall be rock steady and firm. The entire cosmos may collapse, but not the mind of a true devotee. Pleasures or pains do not perturb him. He is ever happy, enjoying devotional pleasure of the Satsang - holy company. He has broken the net of Maya.)

These Satsangis are firmer than the legendary mount Meru. Like a brave warrior, they fight bravely to defeat the inner enemies. They protect like a brave warrior, the territories of their soul.

Kadavun : 10

(They have banished the perceptive sense of the physical being. They have grasped spiritual consciousness. They believe themselves as pure consciousness – the soul. They never recognise their physical being.)

Spiritual wisdom illuminates the inner most, once he has realised himself as distinct from his elemental body. Such enlightened souls are the true devotees of Lord Shree Hari. A true devotee knows that the pleasures or pains are related to the body and not the soul. The soul is beyond the perceptual senses. There is one famous episode in our Satsang, where Shreeji Maharaj had tested the spiritual wisdom of Dada Khachar.

You are mine and I'm yours

Shreeji Maharaj desired to leave Gadhpur and went away from the royal palace of Dada Khachar. Dada Khachar knew about these unpleasant happenings and ran after Shree Hari. He shouted from behind and requested, "O Maharaj! Please stop and wait. Please don't go away." Instead of stopping, Shreeji Mahaaj turned his back and threw a stone hitting the head of Dada Khachar. Dada Khachar sat down in giddiness for a while and ran again following Shree Hari, like an infant running after his mother. Finally he reached him.

With folded hands he prayed to Maharaj, "You may insult and hate me. You may hit me with stones, but I will not leave you, just as a shadow moves with the body. Wherever the body goes, so goes the shadow. Just as a shadow follows a man, I am always with you. Our relation is like that of a relation between a cow and a calf. A baby calf will not leave its mother, despite kicking and biting. The mother cow too, wont leave it's young. I wont go anywhere by deserting you. You are mine and I am yours."

(You have become mine and I belong to you.
O God! You adore many names! O Sahajanand
Swami! Please be with me. O Lord! I am your child.
You sustain the whole of mankind. O Lord of many
names, Please come to me!)

Shreeji Maharaj knew his spiritual wisdom and hugged him heartily. With warmth of love he placed his palm on Dada's forehead, and praised his spiritual wisdom.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, "Just as a man knows himself by his own caste and identifies himself as a Brahmin, Kshatriya or as a man or woman; similarly, a true devotee of God knows full well that he is not the body but is the soul. He knows that the body is inert and the soul is fully conscious. The soul is not bound to any caste or clan. Pains and pleasures are connected to a body, the soul is untouched and above such feelings and bonds. The soul is conscious and active. The body is mortal whilst the soul is immortal. The body is unreal whilst the soul is real. True devotees are conscious of such facts.

(A true ascetic thinks and believes constantly
that pleasures of the sense objects are nothing but
Maya, and takes it to be a defeat of the soul. He is not
touched by any praise or criticism. He lives with
God.)

A detached soul finds himself separate from the worldly pleasures, admiration and criticism. He never pays heed to any rustic talk. Great saint Tukaram spent his life in devotion and meditation. Villagers forced him to ride a donkey and proceeded to take out an ugly and insulting procession. He received happily this blemish and bad name at no fault of others, just to wish good of others. He did happily devotion of God, and forgave people for their ignorance.

Kadavun : 11

(A true ascetic loves only God; nothing else is
dear to him. He worships God. He sees God
constantly. God loves such a devout soul.)

Whom shall God love? God shall love those who see God constantly dwelling in their heart. Install God permanently in your heart. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, "Emancipation means loss of delusion." Capture delusion for success of every kind. Withdraw your mind from elemental life.

Saints are dear to God

Withdraw your mind from the ephemeral relations and attach it firmly in God and devotion. Give diversion to the stream that flows towards Maya, and divert it to devotion and God. Nothing more needs to be done. Learn to manipulate such diversion. Such learning leads to self-benediction. Determine a limit for your relation with your sons and family. Be wise in such relationship, but don't stick to it like a honeybee clung to its honeycomb.

King Janaka was a great emperor. Gracing a splendid throne ruling the empire, dispensing justice and obliging his subjects and directing his cabinet ministers, but he never acted with attachment with heart and soul. Like a perfect showman he performed his role very well without entanglement of the soul. Royal power and family were never dearer to him than that of meditation and God. Only God dwelled in his heart and soul.

Sadguru Premanand Swami says :

(O Dear God! Your eyes are charming like lotus petals. You are very dear to me. You are smiling with love. Your speech is very sweet. You are an ocean of mercy. Please shower mercy and pleasure through your blissful *darshan*. O My Lord! Kindly live forever in my eyes and heart.)

Those who love God never like rustic talk. They dislike the company of sinners. They dislike lies and loitering. They withdraw the sense organs from the sense objects and concentrate absolutely in the image of God. True ascetics are unique and unparalleled. They are not bound by the worldly ways. The three pains cannot harm them.

(Mind, intellect, consciousness and ego together are called *Antahkarana*. True devotees are withdrawn from the path of untruth.)

An honest farmer was very dutiful to his householder duties. Even in the cold of winter, he was used to working hard in his field. In the late evening, he came home after a hard days toil. He washed his feet and readied himself for darshan at the temple. His wife asked him, "Where are you going?"

"I am going to the temple to do *Aarti - Darshan*."

"You are tired from the full days work. Have a nice supper and go to the bed. Don't go to the temple. You'll catch something in such cold. I will not serve you if you were to fall ill," she rebuked.

The docile husband dropped the idea of darshan, and had supper and sleep! He woke up early in the morning and went to his farm to look after the crop. This shows the contemporary tendency. We are ready to spare lots of time for a short tour of the city or a place of entertainment despite preoccupation and weariness, but we will not be ever-ready for Satsang. This shows the craziness of the human mind. The soul is not ever-ready for enlightenment. The unlucky soul has not realised the truth.

We are lazy on the path to God but very fast on the path of the world! We know that family and wealth are not to accompany us at the time of our death. We also know that donations, *punyas* (virtuous deeds) and devotion are the true companion in our final journey. Yet the soul is so obstinate that he will not tread the path of truth despite his knowledge about it.

Those who aspire for self-benediction and eternal pleasure in this present life and in the life hereafter should do devotion, without delay.

Kadavun : 12

(Detached souls are the happiest souls. Their wants and desires have gone. They have no pains or sorrows. They live forever in the benign presence of God.)

The detached souls are very happy in their hearts. Why are they happy? They are happy because they had banished the wants and wishes. They are not hungry of anything. Eating food will not satisfy hunger. Food is a temporary solution to veil the hunger. Even though he may be satisfied by a sumptuous meal, he shall still be hungry again after some time. This shows that hunger does not leave us, when we consume meals. It remains there within us, covered under the food, and reappears forcefully after a few hours. Detached souls have banished their wants and desires inclusive of hunger and thirst of the sense objects. The worldly souls chase the sense objects relentlessly to satisfy their wants and desires, but their thirst and hunger for the sense objects are not quenchable.

Sadguru Brahmanand Swami Says:

(Man's hunger and thirst are unquenchable. If got a rupee he longs for ten or twenty. If got twenty, he desires a hundred or thousand. If got a thousand, he aspires for *lakh*, ten *lakh* or *carore*. If got land, he longs for kingdom. If got kingdom, he will desire the heavenly kingdom of the Gods and good fortune. His mind is unsatiable. Hunger will not leave him unless inner satisfaction through detachment is present.)

Man is a toy or puppet in the hands of desires – wants. He will not be satisfied by worldly wealth. True detachment or asceticism banishes the desires of the sense objects, by salvaging the soul from the attack of Maya.

This does not mean that there should be no room for work/effort. God will not come to us to deliver our livelihood, if we were to sit idle without work. One should work sincerely and should be happy with whatever he gets through his work. He should do devotion and service of God.

Hunger and thirst for the sense objects will not be satisfied forever by consuming the sense objects in there plenty. Everlasting contentment and eternal happiness is available only through detachment. Detachment should be strengthened well by devotion of God. The support of devotion is a must. Detachment separates us from Maya and devotion joins us to God. Therefore devotion must be present along with detachment. Such togetherness brings eternal pleasure.

(God dwells eternally at the heart of a true devotee. God banishes their adversaries and destroys ego and affection. Such devotees have overcome Maya.)

Shreeji Maharaj says “He is my Dada!”

The stream of life is not steady forever. The time may come when one has to face troubles and at times enjoys sudden pleasures.

Adverse times affected Dada Khachar and deprived him of foodgrains. Spiteful Jiva Khachar acted with malice and posted state police at the crop processing centres of Dada Khachar. They seized huge stocks of foodgrains. Nobody was allowed to harvest the food grain from there. There were no foodgrains in the house of Dada Khachar as the police seized all the fresh stock. Dada Khachar was regretful for such helplessness. Shreeji Maharaj and the saints were living with Dada Khachar at the time. What would they also do about their meals? The food containers were empty! Dada’s heart was grieving in pain. Shree Hari and the saints were very dear to Dada Khachar.

Muktanand Swami realized this predicament of his. He prayed to Shreeji Maharaj, “Maharaj! Dada is worried about our needs. We saints will leave for Surat to reduce the burden on him. We have no right to trouble him further in such adverse time.”

Devout ladies Laduba, Jivuba and devout soul Dada Khachar came to know of this and lamented, “Maharaj! You are the real form of Purushottam Narayan. The deities and demi-gods worship your saints. You have graced this place to liberate us. We are most unfortunate in that we have not served you well. This is why the saints have proposed to leave this place of ours.” Laduba and Jivuba cried thus in the throng of deep pain.

Muktanand Swami said, "O God! My Lord! Please stay here at Gadhada. Your presence shall be a support for Dada Khachar. We will leave to reside elsewhere."

Tears of grief appeared in the eyes of Shree Hari. He spoke nothing in shock of the adverse time and sat in deep remorse. Dada Khachar brought quickly some water to refresh Maharaj. Maharaj washed his face and drank some water. Then he said, "We would be unappreciative, if we left Dada Khachar in these adverse times."

He then recited:

(Hills, forests and fields are burning in the wild fire. I am burning, because I have no wings to fly away, but why should I?)

Muktanand Swami prayed, "Maharaj! I am not able to understand it's meaning, please explain it."

Shreeji Maharaj explained: There was once a big banyan tree in the forest. This huge, lush green tree was supported by hundreds of stems and it's thousands of shadey branches accommodated the nests of the many birds.

The Banyan tree was a protective shelter for the many birds. It sustained the birds by offering sumptuous fruits. The birds were chirping playfully on the branches of the banyan tree. A sudden wild fire enveloped the forest in its destructive flames. The devastating fire was devouring the forest, hills and trees, but the birds were sat calmly on the branches of the banyan tree. The Banyan tree said to them, "Birds! God has given you wings. Fly away and save yourselves."

The birds replied, "O Banyan Tree! You are like our great grand father. We have spent many happy days in your protective lap. You have fed us with your nutritious fruits and have taken good care of our young. We are nursed and brought up under your protective shade. Since many generations past, we had enjoyed your company and hospitality. Now at this moment, you are in grave danger. We cannot leave you in such precarious state. It shall be most shameful on our part, if were to leave you in this moment of death. We have lived together, and if God desires so, we will die together!"

God was pleased by such brave birds and reduced the force of the fire to save the birds and the tree. The Banyan tree and the birds were saved safely by the grace of God.

While wiping his eyes, Shreeji Maharaj said, "When inferior souls like birds reciprocate happily, why can't we? He is 'my Dada'. He has taken good care of us by offering sumptuous meals in adverse times of drought. He had celebrated with us the *samaiyas* and religious festivals and had spent thousands of rupees for the many colourful celebrations. We cannot leave him alone in his adverse time. Such act shall be a sin on our side. We will live together in this adverse time to strengthen the moral of Dada Khachar, Laduba, Jivuba, Somadevi, Surprabhadevi and Soma Faiba. We cannot leave them in their grief."

As soon as the decision was conveyed, some police officers of the state came there. They delivered the state's judgement to lift the restrictions on the harvesting of food grains from the fields. They asked Dada Khachar to take the entire lot of food grains to his home. Dada Khachar brought it home and stored the food grains at his royal palace.

Shreeji Maharaj has said in Vachanamrit (Gadhada L-11) that the soul shall be risk free if he attaches himself to God, in the manner he has attached himself to the body. He shall be protected well like Dada Khachar, in the most adverse of times and place.

Inculcate the virtuous habit to cope with adverse times, with due tolerance and solace. Do devotion of God.

(A *Chakor* – Indian red-legged partridge – looks at the moon without diverting its vision. Similarly, a detached soul concentrates directly in the divine image of Shree Hari.)

A *chakor* never looks here nor there, but looks directly at the moon. True devotees of God, concentrate directly in the image of God. They never look elsewhere. Though occupied in different professions and occupations, their mind and thoughts dwell constantly in the divine image of Shree Hari. Just like a mother who engages in household chores but still is mentally with her child. Satsang means constant memory of God, lack of such memory should be treated as unholy association. Do devotion and remember God. Sadguru Brahmanand Swami describes the divine image of Shree Hari:

(My eyes are tempted by your charming image. An attractive *kalagi* decorates your turban. I will bedeck you with a precious pearl necklace, O my dearest! Please dwell in my heart and soul. Your elevated chest and walking style are different from the world. Brahmanand Swami says that he is ready to sacrifice everything of his for the sake of God - Shree Hari.)

Invite lovingly our Lord – Shree Hari to dwell in your heart. Be a good affectionate of God, don't be malicious but be merciful, don't be passionate but be compassionate, be a faithful and trustworthy devotee. Tie God by a silken thread of love and faith, Shreeji Maharaj shall be pleased to give us darshan of his blissful image. God resides where there is love. God leaves such place where malice resides. The scriptures have taught in a nutshell – merge yourself in the divine image of God.

(A fish convulses in suffocation and dies immediately if taken out of the water. Similarly a detached soul convulses in pain and discomfort, if separated from God.)

Water is life for the fish. A fish cannot live without water. For a true devotee, God is his life and soul. A devotee cannot live without God. Worldly pleasures cannot please a true devotee. The life of a devotee is quite different than that of other people.

A suitable groom has been chosen

Devout lady Rambai was a detached devotee and belonged to *Sathwara* community. Her father and mother died in her childhood. She was without any support. Alaiya Khachar acted as her foster father and took good care of her. She was treated like a daughter. In her frequent visits to Gadhpur, she did satsang with Laduba and Jivuba. She detached herself from the world and coloured herself in true colour of Satsang. She became a devotee of Shree Hari.

In adulthood she was asked by her foster father Alaiya Khachar to think about a marriage. Alaiya Khachar spoke his mind and told her that he was searching for a suitable boy to get her married. Rambai said to her father, "Father! Don't worry about me. I have found a suitable groom, and by my thought, speech and actions, I am already married to him:

(I am married to Shree Hari at the cost of my life. I am devoted to Shree Hari and expect nothing from this world. Worldly pleasures are illusive like a mirage. I have disowned the worldly pleasures. Lord Shree Hari is very dear to me. He is my eternal husband. I have destroyed the fear of widowhood.)

"Supreme Lord Shree Hari is my husband. I am engaged to him," said Rambai to Alaiya Khachar.

Alaiya Khachar said, "The path of detachment and asceticism is very sharp, like a blade of a sword. I will gift you precious attires and ornaments. I will give you assets and the property of many villages. Maids and attendants shall be at your service. Please reconsider your decision."

Rambai said, "The sense objects are of no use to me. They are produced from the earth and shall be merged together with the earth."

She removed gracefully all her ornaments inclusive of earrings, nose flower, necklace and bangles, and submitted humbly at the feet of her groom-to-be. The groom saw in her the idol form of asceticism. He was astonished by her sublime personality. The groom said, "These gifts from a sister cannot be accepted by me. Please accept these to donate it to some religious cause. I am most fortunate to walk with such a *sati* (chaste lady), around the holy fire during the marriage ceremony." Alaiya Khachar was pleased by the spiritual wisdom of the groom. Rambai then came to Gadhpur and dwelled with Laduba and Jivuba. She spent the whole life as a detached devotee and did devotion of Shree Hari.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, "The legendary bird *Anala* – flies freely in the high sky. It enjoys such flights. Why should it come down upon the

earth? The Anala would not land on the earthly soil at the cost of her freedom. True devotees – detached souls – travel freely in the divine form of God.

(Detached souls dwell mentally in the divine form of Shree Hari. These souls never like to dwell in an elemental body. They dwell forever in Lord Shree Hari—their husband.)

A detached soul dwells consciously in the image of God. Just as meals are food for the body, the acts like *pooja*, meditation, *japa* and devotion of God are the food for the soul. Rise early in the morning and begin your day with *poojan* and devotion of God. Just as we bathe for bodily cleanliness and purity, we should remember Lord Shree Hari for the cleanliness and purity of the mind.

(If a royal queen leaves her royal palace and roams door-to-door begging meals, then she would not be called a queen, but instead be insulted as a poor begger.)

A royal queen lives a luxurious life at the royal palace. Attendants, maids and royal guards take good care of her dignity and royal majesty by attending to her service. Wealth, power and luxuries are at her disposal. If she rejects such royal life and palace and begs meals by knocking on the doors of householders, she would not be honoured as a queen, but treated as a poor begger. We are at the refuge of Lord Shree Hari – Lord Swaminarayan – The Supreme Lord of the universe. We are in a supreme position. Our fellowship – Satsang – is supreme by its sacred ways of devotion, *pooja*, *kirtan* and *katha satsang*. We should not abandon it to knock on the doors of others to beg for money, progeny, wife or comforts. If we did, we would be considered a beggar and not a respectable devotee. Live like a master. Don't live like a slave of the sense objects. Stop begging and do devotion.

Pada : 3

(Detachment is the most sought after wealth. People should know this. The other things are hurdles to distance us from God. Even though there may be many virtuous attributes, the ego within will not be destroyed without detachment. Ego is like a snake, nursed lovingly by the milk of the sense objects.)

Though there may be many virtues, carnal desires and ego, they shall not be destroyed in absence of detachment. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami explains this by an example of a snake. A snake, tamed and brought up with personal care and nourished by wholesome foods of milk, never forgets his venomous bite and will not be faithful to his master, despite such good care provided by him.

Ego is like a snake. Ego is the master of the situation. ॐ I am the supreme consciousness!

Once, the saints and Muktanand Swami were camping at Daria Khan Ghummat. Some egoistic people came there to see the saints. They argued with Muktanand Swami about the ultimate truth – *Brahman* and tried to prove that they themselves – were the supreme consciousness – *Brahman*. In the course of this heated debate and dialogue, a snake fell on the ground from the top of a tamarind tree. Those ignorant people retreated themselves back on sight of the snake, but the saintly souls maintained steadfastness and sat quiet in compassion without interrupting *japa mala* chants. They continued their unbroken devotion. The snake passed through the rows of devout saints and came in front of Muktanand Swami. Unperturbed by this, Swami did *Bhajan Kirtan* with solace and compassion. The snake climbed on the lap of Swami, ascended to his shoulder, made garland like rounds about Swami's neck and spread its hood above the head of Swami. It appeared like Lord Sheshnaga sheltering Swami by his protective hood. Swami and saints were engrossed in singing *Dhoon* of 'Swaminarayan'. The snake was nodding his head with the hiss of pleasure to the tunes of devotional music. After some time, it descended from Sadguru Muktanand Swami and disappeared in the dense canopy of the tamarind tree.

Those who enforced themselves earlier as supreme consciousness – *Brahman*, came forward hesitantly and surrendered shyly at the feet of Swami, "Swami! Please pardon us for our false ego. Please, receive us in your benign refuge. The saints saw in them, aspiring souls. They preached true religion and taught them the ethical duties of this Satsang.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami narrates an example of a *kurkut* flower. One can wash his clothes with the *Kurkut* flowers, to remove dirt. Similarly, the herb of detachment should be used to wash away the dirt of the soul. Those who have walked on the path of detachment are most fortunate. They can win the world.

Devotion of God is most intoxicating. Such an intoxicated soul acts differently. He is not enticed towards anything. He is free of hunger, thirst and pains. It is a most challenging intoxicant and an ordinary man cannot bear such intoxication. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami has narrated the *Katha* of *Saar Siddhi* under such powerful intoxication of devotion and detachment.

Great Royal Bard – Ladudanji was used to wearing ornaments weighting one kilogram in gold. He was honoured at the royal court of Junagadh, Jamnager and Bhavanagar states. The emperors and kings of princely such states honoured him personally at the royal court of each respective state. Such royal bard – poet Ladudanji surrendered absolutely to Lord Shree Hari, when he did darshan of Lord Swaminarayan. He forsook wealth and world, for benign refuge of Shree Hari. Withdrawing himself from the status of a stately bard, Ladudan became Brahmanand Swami and replaced the ornaments and jewellery with a rosary - a *kanthi*. The locks of Maya broke open to realise the divinity of the

Supreme Lord, his heart and soul illuminated by the knowledge of the ultimate reality. After his first darshan of Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan, poet Ladudanji sang with devotional fervour:

(This is my finest hour. I saw Shree Hari by my own eyes. My Guru has opened the inner recesses by the key of divine knowledge. My vision and eyes are at peace through the blissful darshan of my Lord.)

Ladudanji says, "My innermost is unlocked by the darshan of Sahajanand Swami. Now I don't want to go back to my home. I want to be a saint to do service of Lord Swaminarayan." Only fortunate souls wear the saintly robe of detachment.

Kadavun : 13

(Absolute detachment is razor sharp. It cannot be explained by learning about it. Death and time are scared of its sight. It's greatness and majesty is unfathomable)

Absolute detachment is razor sharp. It's sharp blade breaks the shackles of delusion, affection and Maya and the unbound soul rises to the conscious state. The soul has no relations like father, mother, sons, children etc. The soul is neither a male nor female. It is ageless, immortal and detached. The elemental body rests on the earth and the soul ascends to the Supreme Lord. Thoughts like these maintain consciousness of the soul. Such a conscious soul listens to God in his innermost. Detached devotees merge themselves in the majestic form of God.

(A true aspirant remembers God constantly on rise of devotional fervour. He descends deep in his inner most and remembers Lord Shree Krishna.)

Sadguru Nikshkulanand Swami asks us to do devotion. Do devotion in your heart. Do mental devotion. Don't exhibit it to the world:

A devotee aspired to do the *japa* of *Janmangal Stotra*. He desired to do it in such a way that others were to know about his devotion and therefore did not perform japa at home but instead he went to the temple. Thus, he displayed his devotional inclination to thousands of devotees. It is better to do Japa and devotion at a temple. A devotee receives more *punya* by such devotion in the temple. But the devotee in this case, had desired more attention and to get it, he sat in the temple, murmuring Janmangal Stotra. He craved for public recognition and publicity, the temple and Janmangal were the means for him to earn name and fame. While sitting before God in the temple, he tried to display to the visiting devotees, his dedicated devotion and penance. This kind of devotion is

superficial, neither deep nor dedicated. It is just a show and means to gain self-praise and ego. Descend deep in the innermost recesses and have a heart-to-heart dialogue with Lord Shree Hari.

Profound devotion is not a subject for show. Such a true devotee never cares for public attention or demonstration. They merge themselves in devotional bliss. They don't care whether they are in a hut or a bungalow, forest or town, in public or in seclusion. They live under strong intoxication of devotion. They know only God and forget the rest.

(Decrease or increase, victory or defeat, loss or gain; none are real. True devotees know this and concentrate absolutely in the divine form of Lord Shree Hari.)

Those who have concentrated meditatively in the divine form of Lord Shree Hari are unique and unparalleled.

Devotee Shree Govardhanbhai came once to Gadhpur to do *darshan* of Shree Hari. He saluted Shree Hari and looked for a place to sit. Shreeji Maharaj said to him, "Govardhanbhai! Come and sit here on this bedstead."

He sat obediently beside Shree Hari on the bedstead. Kathi devotees saw him sitting there. They said, "Govardhanbhai! Sit properly. Don't show your back to Shree Hari."

Shreeji Maharaj then said, "Let him sit as he is. He sees God everywhere anyway."

(Wherever I look, I see Lord Rama)

Shreeji Maharaj said, "Govardhanbhai! You had walked a long distance to come here. You must be tired. Comfort yourself on this bedstead."

Saying so, Lord Shree Hari shifted himself to the other side of the bedstead and left enough space for him to lay down. Govardhanbhai laid his person comfortably, besides Maharaj. Shreeji Maharaj asked his saints to press and massage the feet of Govardhanbhai. Muktanand Swami and other saints pressed his feet. Kathi Devotees could not digest such indecency of Govardhanbhai. They barked in anger, "O Fool Govardhan! Get up, have you no shame? You are sleeping shamelessly on the bed of Shree Hari, and great ascetic Muktanand Swami and others are massaging your body. Don't be so rude and shameless."

Shreeji Maharaj said to them, "Please, keep quite and let him sleep. He is lost, meditating in the divine image of God. He sees nothing but my image. Sugar and salt both are same for him." Some of the devotees doubted such indifference. Sugar and salt cannot be equal in taste. Govardhanbhai should be tested at once to unmask this hypocrisy. They kept sugar and salt separately in a large dish and asked him to consume some. Govardhanbhai had both the contents simultaneously without any discrimination and emptied the dish while

reciting the blissful name of Lord Sahajanand Swami. Devotees were taken aback by this astonishing act of Govardhanbhai.

Those who have attained the state of pure consciousness (*brahmanroopa*), live and act as pure consciousness separate from the elemental being. A worldly soul may lose his life with such a large quantity of salt.

That was the power of devotion. That was the power of pure consciousness.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami narrates an example. One who flies high in the sky sees nothing on the earth. A detached devotee, whose vision is expanded like the sky and space, sees God everywhere and sees nothing else. When God steps in, Maya leaves forever. Sadguru Premanand Swami says:

(Prince of Vraj, Lord Shree Krishna dwells in my heart. He is charming, joyous and most dear. I love him heartily. He smiles at me. He is the love of Premanand.)

Vyasa Narayan says that he has determined firmly and conclusively after a thorough study of all the scriptures, that the soul should do continuous devotion of the Lord.

(I have studied all the scriptures with repeated reasoning and concluded that Lord Narnarayan must be worshipped constantly with concentration.)

Meditational concentration pacifies the thought waves of the mind and the soul rises to the state of pure consciousness.

Kadavun : 14

(Absolute detachment is the highest elevation of happiness. A detached soul is the happiest and free from pain of souls. Only detached souls know about this supreme state.)

A detached devotee enjoys celestial pleasure of sight of God. Such pleasure keeps him away from the touch of Maya. Gold needs to be heated in the flames of a fire to make it hundred percent pure – solid gold. Such purified gold would be called solid gold, absolute gold – unalloyed and pure. The fire of detachment purifies the soul by burning pollutants like *Maya*, *Mamata* (affection) and ego.

Queen Kushalkunvarba of Dharmapur state sent some *chokha* (rice) for Shree Hari. Shreeji Maharaj said to the assembly, "What is this?"

"Maharaj! It is Chokha, said the devotees. (Gujarati word chokha has two distinct meanings: rice and pure)

Maharaj said, "Be *chokha* (pure) like this, if desired the divine abode."

(*Vishalyakarni* herb removes painful arrows from a wounded body. Pure asceticism acts like *Vishalyakarni* and removes the arrows of carnal desires from our wounded soul.)

But where should we get the medicinal herbs of *Vishalyakarni* to remove the arrows of carnal desires? The elixir is very much here in the form of *Saar Siddhi*. *Saar Siddhi* is an elixir to remove the arrows of desires and to heal the wounds of the soul. Listen to this scripture attentively with love. Do devotion and *Satsang*. It will remove the arrows and heal the wounded soul. Just as what soap is to the cloth, similarly devotion is to the sense organs for removal of dirt and impurities. Knowledge rises through devotion and asceticism rises through knowledge.

(The rankling arrows of pains and pleasures poke and pierce the body. Those arrows and its pain cannot be removed without the help of reinforced detachment.)

A thorn pricked in the body, gives constant pain. The soul will not be at peace without removing that thorn. The souls on this earth are pricked by the thorns of the inner enemies: *Moha* (delusion), *Maya* (illusion) and *Mamata* (affection). Those thorns prick each moment and cause restlessness.

The thorn of ego hurt great saint Narada. God helped him by removing the thorn from his wounded soul. Here below is the episode:

Compassion melted the stone

Narada was an expert in playing the *Veena*. His dexterity and concentration were matchless. He was admired everywhere for his devotional music. The souls danced with his celestial music of the *veena*. Universal fame and worldwide admiration intoxicated Narada and pampered his ego. Egotistic Narada found nobody equaling him!

The Lord knew about the ego of Narada. A great ascetic like Narada should be ego-free. God is the destroyer of ego and false pride. He destroys it by any means necessary. The Lord desired to free Narada from the burden of his ego.

Narada came to Lord Vishnu, singing sweet tunes of 'Narayan....NarayanNarayan' and saluted Shree Hari. He sat before him. Lord Hanuman was also sat beside Narada.

The Lord said, "Narada! O Great saint! I have heard much admiration of your celestial music. Please favour us with your blissful tunes."

Proud Narada began to play. All were drawn by the sweet tunes of the *Veena*. Narada looked with pride at Lord Vishnu, but the Lord was sat there

unimpressed. Neither did he admire nor was he pleased! The Lord turned to Hanumanji and said, "Hanuman! What is your opinion about this music?"

Lord Hanuman smiled at God without any comment. Narada disliked this. He reacted in excitement, "Bhagwan! There are many experts in this assembly. They know music very well. Instead of asking them, you are asking Hanuman to give opinion about my music. What does he know about music? You are making a joke out of me in this assembly!"

God said, "Narada! I am not joking. Don't make a sulky face here. Hanuman too is an expert player of Veena. Come, give him your Veena."

"O Lord! I can't give my veena. It is a delicate instrument. He may break the strings or damage the instrument. I can't give it," said Narada.

God said, "Narada! Give him a chance. I assure you, he will not damage your Veena. Please give it to him."

Narada gave it half-heartedly. Hanumanji took it with due respect and with devotional love he played the tunes. The sublime celestial feelings of unselfish devotion streamed wonderful music from the veena and the enthralled the audience who enjoyed meditatively the soulful devotional music. There were no gimmicks of rhyme, rhythm or diction, but a direct dialogue between the soul and the supreme that melted the ego and baser instincts. The assembly was spell bound by this celestial concert. As the music stopped, they returned from the meditational trance and admired the fine art of Hanumanji. Narada too was amazed by such heavenly music.

Narada prayed with folded hands to Lord Shree Hari, "O Bhagwan! Please forgive me. I thought that I was the best in playing music, but Shree Hanumanji is the greatest amongst the players of Veena. He is a master player of music. O God! I have realised my mistake. I am very sorry for my egoistic behaviour. Please forgive me and may I take back my Veena."

Bhagwan said, "Yes. Take it," but when Narada, tried to pick it up, he found it very heavy to lift. Was it stuck to the slab on the ground? It was not moving at all! Embarrassed, Narada looked helplessly at the Lord and prayed, "O Bhagwan! O my Lord! My Veena is stuck firmly to the slab. Please help me free it."

The Lord said, "O Narada! The devotional music of Hanuman had melted the stone and your Veena is jammed in the melted stone. The slab would need to be melted again to free your veena from the stone. Do one thing, sing with devotional feelings and compassion and melt the stone. Narada sang with devotion and compassion and tried his best to touch the core of the slab, but the efforts turned futile. Narada was very sad upon his failure. He prayed to God, "O God! I am helpless. It is not within my capacity to detach the Veena from the slab. Please help me."

God asked Hanuman to sing again. Lord Hanuman sang with devotion, compassion and selfless love. His devotional music moved the core of the stone and softened it in no time. He took the Veena from the stone and delivered it to

Narada with due gratitude. Narada hugged him with love and respect and said, "O Hanuman! I admire and respect your devotional music that has melted the stone by its majestic power."

Narada's ego melted and vanished. He sang the praises of God for helping him to realise his drawbacks. There are temples of God, demigods, deities and great ascetics, but there are no temples of Narada, anywhere on the earth. Bhagwan had helped him personally to remove the pricking thorn of ego. Narada had realised it in his inner most.

Be ego free, introspect in the inner most and eradicate the root and branch of ego. This is the core teaching of Saar Siddhi.

Kadavun : 15

(Detachment is greatest and supreme amongst the penance and virtues. Knowledge and other means are futile without detachment. Stop your blind acts. Be spiritually wise and introspect within the innermost).

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to act with spiritual wisdom. He admires detachment - pure asceticism. Devotion with pure asceticism is the only path to self-benediction. Think wisely with a broad and far vision. Think of the outcome of your action, before you act. Don't harm others. It is a sinful non-virtuous act resulting in grief and sorrow.

The Best is to Forgive

Think wisely and think more about the future. Think in advance about the outcome of your anger.

A *haribhakta* was residing in a village. It was a small village and the resident villagers respected him due to his pious and sin-free life. But in a fit of anger he acted in haste and committed a sin. For many days he lived under the burden of that sin. He lost peace of mind and concentration. Finally he went to a saint to seek counsel. He saluted the saint and wept silently. The saint knew him personally, therefore, he asked in compassion, "Bhagat! Is there a problem? Why are you crying?"

The Bhagat said with tears in his eyes, "O Swamiji! I am a sinner. I have committed a sin. Please suggest to me some form of atonement. I have lost peace of mind, and there is no pleasure in absence of peace. I am so upset in worries and tension that I have lost hunger and thirst. I am not able to sleep at night. I don't know what penance I should do to atone myself! O great saint! Please help me."

The saint asked, "Bhagat! Tell me, what sin you have committed?"

Bhagat prayed humbly, "O Saint! I love my children and my family. Some months ago I had arranged for my daughter's marriage. She is the darling of my family and me. She asked me for a small gift or ornament - a light gold chain. Instead of granting her wish, I hit her on her head. She bled profusely due to serious injury to her forehead. I am rich, but in my miserly nature, I committed a major sin of hitting my own daughter. We got her married after proper treatment. She is at her house with her husband, but the injury had damaged her mental power and in the spur of the moment she acts like an insane woman. She has lost her confidence and reasoning and lives under great inner duress. I had tried repeatedly to invite her to our home to live with our family. But she has refused it in a most insulting way. She says she doesn't want to be there with me. She would prefer a painful life to die there in her agonies, but she will never cross the threshold of my house." The Bhagat cried profusely and narrated his story to the saint.

The saint said, "There is no atonement to free you from this major sin. Yama will punish you in hell for your major sin."

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, "Have you lost your inner and outer eyes? Don't act blindly. Learn to live a noble life. Don't act obstinately. Forgive generously even in the case of damage or loss. Be careful not to repeat such follies." This is the essence of Saar Siddhi.

(A bride needs a priest to get her a groom (through marriage). Similarly, a man needs detachment to attain God.)

Detachment acts like a priest and puts the hand of the devotee in the blessed hands of God – Lord Purushottam Narayan. A third person is needed to forge the marriage between a man and a woman. Similarly, a third person or thing named detachment is a must in devotional marriage between a devotee and his God – the meeting between a soul and the supreme soul. The soul receives eternal pleasure of his sacred meeting with the supreme soul. The eternal pleasure, received by marriage with God, cannot be compared with the pleasure of a marriage between a man and a woman. Life shall be a perfect life, if coloured his ownself in the colour of Shree Hari.

Don't Finish the Final Ritual of Marriage

Mayaram Bhatt lost his wife at a young age. He desired a second marriage, his relatives insisted for it. He thought on it for a long time and decided to seek the advice of his Guru, Ramanand Swami. He made up his mind to act as per the advice of his Guru. He came to Loj to seek holy company of Guru Ramanand Swami.

Ramanand Swami was addressing the *satsang* at that time. Mayaram Bhatt sat beside the other devotees and looked at Ramanand Swami in a perplexed mind. Ramanand Swami was deep in concentration in his discourse and was narrating at that moment, an educative episode. While narrating the story, he looked at Mayaram Bhatt and read his mind. He knew that his disciple was anxious to ask about his second marriage. Ramanand Swami resolved the problem beforehand and said, "If a devotee is about to conclude the final ritual of marriage (who has finished the major rituals of his marriage) asks me of my opinion on the matter, I would ask him instantly not to finish the final ritual. Don't go through with marriage. Stop it instantly." There will be no pleasure in it. Real pleasure – eternal pleasure dwells in the lotus feet of Lord Shree Hari.

"The all-knowing Guru has answered my prayer," thought Mayaram Bhatt. He resolved firmly to not to go through a second marriage. He desired to do devotion of Shree Hari.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says:

(The devotees who wore the *chundari* of the eternal groom (God) shall be admired and respected by the people of the world).

Those who wore the attire of detachment shall be dedicated to God and devotion of Shree Hari. Those, in whose heart dwells the image of Lord Shree Krishna shall be redeemed by their devotion. Sadguru Brahmanand Swami sings:

(I am soaked in the colour and shades of my dear God. The image of Lord dwells eternally in my heart and soul. I stand before him with folded hands to pray to him. I am bound by the rope of divine love and cannot leave him for even a while, away from my eye's sight. My life is fulfilled by the embrace of the Lord of Brahmanand Swami.)

Kadavun - 16

(Absolute detachment is like a priceless ornament. Its pleasures are the best amongst all others. The cycle of births and deaths ends forever, if that ornament is worn. Only the most fortunate souls receive this priceless ornament.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami admires the eternal value of absolute detachment. Only those who have worn the ornament of absolute detachment shall be redeemed and freed from the cycle of births and deaths. Absolute detachment rises from accumulated *punyas* of the many past births. Absolute detachment decorates the life of man. Sadguru Gopalanand Swami, Brahmanand Swami, Nishkulanand Swami and Nityanand Swami have earned name, fame and majesty by adorning the ornament of absolute detachment. They are great among the saints. Their virtuous attributes are recorded in gold in the ancient history of the sect.

(Pure detachment is most adorable. It is the majestic charm of a devotee. We should know this well. One looks ugly without detachment. Think and act wisely.)

A devotee without detachment is like a house infested by termite. It looks good and safe in its external appearance, but the inner hollowness has made it most unsafe. Its foundation is damaged. Such souls have no room for ethical duties, knowledge and detachment in their personal and public life. Their life is very poor. Though clad in saffron coloured attires, they are not afraid of God.

They act recklessly without any balance between acts and decorum. They are short-tempered and hypocritical. If a true saint shows them their fault, they react in vengeance and enmity. They don't benefit those who benefited them. How can one expect good things from such spoiled souls?

(God shall not be happy at all on seeing such undetached people)

God dislikes undetached souls. Swami narrates here the detached souls.

(Shukji, Sankas, Janaka, Jaydeva and Kadarja were great devotees of Bhagwan. They were liked and loved by the Lord, due to their ornament of detachment.)

The greats like Shukdeva, Sanakas, Janaka, Jayadeva and Kadarja have earned name, fame, love and majesty by their absolute detachment and asceticism. Great devotees Laduba, Jivuba, Rajba and many others in the ancient time of Lord Shreeji Maharaj, have earned unparalleled name, fame, love and majesty due to their firm asceticism and absolute detachment. They fought firmly to resist the storms of pain, grief and sorrows. Lord Shreeji Maharaj has remembered King Janaka in his blessed words of Vachanamrit. King Janaka ruled his empire and led his imperial court by sitting on a splendid throne of gold and gems. Plush palaces, royal powers and sense objects were at his disposal, but he acted as pure consciousness – the soul, by separating himself from the gross body. His life was like a lotus blooming in the middle of the body-like water, though rising and living in water, the lotus is distinctly separate from the water – untouched. Janaka too lived as a soul distinctly separate from his body and the ephemeral world. Though his whole capital city was on fire, Janaka reacted in tranquil bliss and said that nothing of his was burnt. He was an untouched ascetic, detached absolutely from power and wealth.

(Though bedecked excessively with the ornaments of glass, shells and cheap metals, it does not look good or adorable in absence of pure gold.)

Though bedecked with plenty of ornaments made of cheap metals, shells and glass, there will be no charm or beauty without the ornaments of gold. Gold is gold! Detachment or asceticism is like gold. There is no alternative, no other option. Lord Shreeji Maharaj has said repeatedly: "O Devotees! Please be kind to us and spoil not this spotless *chunari* with any kind of dirt. Don't give a bad name or blemish to this holy fellowship. Practise ethical duties, be friendly to the fellow *satsangis*, spread the pleasant fragrance of *satsang*, be united and help others in holy company.

Pada: 4

(All other means hold no capacity to stand higher in comparison to *vairagya* (detachment). These others include *Japa* (chants), *Tapa* (penance), *Tirtha* (holy shrines) and *Yagna* (holy-fires). Absolute detachment is supreme and unparalleled amongst the redeeming means.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami explains no benedictory means hold any capacity to compete with the supreme means of detachment. *Japa, Tapa, Tirtha* and *Yagyas* are good as redeeming means, but they can't stand high in comparison to detachment. Detachment is supreme among all the other means. Other means are helpful in the path of salvation. Those too are the means to attain God. Suppose in his penance, one leaves his body in the snow-covered peaks of the Himalayas. If such a soul is not freed from his desires then even after such penance he is still unable to attain the bliss of Moksha. Desire will detain him by force to loiter in the endless cycle of birth and deaths.

No other means stands equal to the image of god, when one walks forward on the path of devotion. The benedictory virtues like faith, trust and celibacy, and the benedictory means like *Tapa, Daan* (donation), service, *Japa, Yoga* and holy-fires may be with us for ultimate benediction of soul. But if we have not won the inner enemies like *Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Maan, Moha, Mamata, Vaasana* and *Trishna*, then the precious wealth of the virtues and benedictory means shall be ruined in no time by the uncontrollable force of the inner enemies.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami explains precisely the principle of Saar-Siddhi - Don't be dragged into the dirty climate of delusion. Be fault-free and forsake desires. Do devotion and relish the blissful pleasure of God.

Kadavun - 17

(Those who have forsaken everything through acute detachment are most fortunate souls. There is nothing better than detachment. Absolute detachment opens the gates of celestial pleasures.)

Detachment is most beneficial. Detached souls are most fortunate souls. Who is said to be a fortunate soul? Do you know? Those who have wealth and power are treated as fortunate by the world. According to Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami, only those who have detached absolutely are fortunate. Detachment is the most majestic fortune.

I have brought here only that which has been saved!

Amba Sheth of village Gadhali had been a true devotee of Lord Shreeji Maharaj. He did service of Lord Shree Hari by each such means. He always thought that nothing is of any use, if not served to Shree Hari. Once he desired

to do service of Lord Shreeji Maharaj. He carried on his head, complete bedding and a comfortable bedstead, and came to Gadhada-dhaam. Lord Shreeji Maharaj was addressing an assembly. He looked inquisitively at Amba Sheth and the luggage. Amba Sheth prayed submissively, "Maharaj! My Lord! Fire at the village has destroyed everything. Whatever was saved is here at your service."

Shreeji Maharaj said, "What? Burnt everything? Saved nothing?"

Amba Sheth said, "Maharaj! My Lord! Nothing is saved except these. Whatever survived is here at your service. Such shocking statement surprised the assembly.

Amba Sheth looked at them and submitted further, "My Lord! Those that are not in your use are the items that are lost. Only they need to be treated as burnt, that are not in your service and only that is treated as saved, which is at your service." He arranged thereafter the cot under the cool shade of *margosa* tree and sat the bedding on the cot. Shreeji Maharaj received happily the gift of selfless love. Amba Sheth served him with devotion and love. Only spiritually wise souls have such most sought after opportunity. The accumulated *punyas* of the many past births have caused such good fortune. Sadguru Muktanand Swami sings:

(The Lord has given me great pleasure. God has destroyed for me the hazardous births and painful deaths. It is the rise of *punyas* of my past births. God has extinguished the burning fire of my heart. I have received the most sought after *darshan* of my Lord. All my pains have vanished. My heart bursts in blissful joy. I cannot be stopped by anybody.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says: Detachment cannot be attained without the merciful pleasure of God. Heavy rain is able to flood a river. One cannot flood a river by pumping water from a well. Even a reservoir cannot overflow through an artificial supply of water. Similarly, the selfless love for God overflows from the heart on rise of absolute detachment.

(A child cannot be produced without parents.
Similarly, true detachment cannot arise without God
and his devotee.)

Just as parents are a must in the birth of a child, God and a devotee are a must for asceticism and detachment. Therefore maintain extra-good relations with God and his devotee. Worldly-wise people used to maintain good relations with influential people such as government officers, ministers, the wealthy and rich people. Why? For what? Because they would help them in their adverse times. Such influential people help a lot in matters related to property, estate, business and financial matters. They get things done through their powerful contacts. But if one was to maintain such contact and relation with God, through selfless devotion, then the problems related to the afterlife would be solved forever – no more fear of rebirth and death.

Attach yourself to God and his saints. A true saint installs God in our heart. Food grains cannot be produced without land and seeds. True asceticism and detachment cannot be cultivated without God and his saints. Innocence and holiness are not possible without pure detachment. God cannot be attained without absolute innocence and holiness. True and eternal happiness cannot be attained without realisation of God.

(One should not act like a need-free man if desiring to get something. He should live with the detached saints and should act most humbly like a slave of the slaves.)

An aspirant of God should live most humbly like a needy person in the holy company of saints, and should act like a slave of the slaves. Lord Shreeji Maharaj has said to Somla Khachar that due to the divine loyalty between the world and God, the world was unable to love God absolutely. Live like a slave of the slaves in the holy fellowship of saints.

Marrying Gentleman! Get Married in Happy Wedlock!

Shreeji Maharaj graced the village of Ganod to give devotional pleasure to his devotees. Devout soul Alibhai was a resident of Ganod. Groom Alibhai was to step into householdership through his marriage. The marriage party was ready to proceed to the house of the bride. Alibhai knew about Shree Hari's graced presence at the garden. He desired to earn the blessings of Maharaj, and took his marriage party to the garden. Bedecked with the groom's attires and ornaments, Alibhai came alone to the garden and stood before Shree Hari with folded hands. The saints and devotees were assembled in front of Shree Hari. Shreeji Maharaj was engrossed in discourse. Devout Alibhai saluted Shree Hari, but Shreeji Maharaj did not look at him and continued with his preachings. Alibhai stood there impatiently to receive blessings of Maharaj, but Maharaj paid no attention to him. The *Parshad* then said to Maharaj, "O Lord! Alibhai begs for you blessed permission in his marriage." But Maharaj said nothing and paid no attention to it. Alibhai stood there with due decorum awaiting blessed permission. After some time, the *Parshad* prayed again to Maharaj, "Maharaj! The marriage party is waiting impatiently outside the garden. Alibhai is at your service to receive your blessings for his marriage. He and his marriage party are not to leave this place without your blessed permission. Please pass your blessings."

Shreeji Maharaj looked at them and said, "Get married, O gentleman! Go and get married. Nobody is free in this world to do devotion of God. The people entangled in the cobweb of affection and the illusive *Maya*, have no time for devotion of God. It is okay Alibhai, get married and be happy." Shreeji Maharaj repeated his permission thrice. Alibhai gathered that Shreeji Maharaj desires him to not forget devotion and God in his householder life. A lotus flower blooms in the water but lives there without attachment - untouched by

water. A householder should live in the world without being attached to it. Alibhai married with such thought. Though a Muslim, he practised the tenets of the Sampradaya. Did *Bhajan*, *Kirtan* and devotion of Lord Shree Hari. Lord Shree Hari dwelled forever in his heart. Alibhai begot a son by the grace of Lord Shree Hari. His son too followed the path of his father. Alibhai got him married and taught him his trade and business. Alibhai and his family were an ideal to be followed by the villagers.

Alibhai said once to his son, "My Son! I have looked after you for eighteen years since your birth, by taking good care of your education, livelihood, occupation and married life. This house, assets, wealth and business are yours. Take good care of the property and our family. Now it is your turn to look after and serve me for eighteen years. I will come once every day to have my meal and for the rest of the day I will do devotion of God."

The son said to his father "Father! It is my duty to serve you. Feel free to do devotion and meditation. I shall be a silent partner in your devotion to God." Alibhai spent the rest of his life in devotion and ascended to the divine abode of God.

Be conscious and do devotion. Selfless devotion removes the impurities of the body and mind.

Kadavun - 18

(There shall be no pain at all, if pleased a saints. A tormented soul shall be at peace by the cool breeze from the ocean-like saints of Shree Hari.)

Superlative asceticism destroys the pains. A true saint removes the pains of a tormented soul. The soul shall be at peace.

Don't Suck Blood like a Bug

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami tells us to be wise. Apply your mind. Don't poke your nose here and there. Don't act thoughtlessly. A calf cannot get milk by hitting his head on the legs of a cow; he can get the milk only by putting his mouth to the udder. There are many in this holy fellowship that hit their head here and there. They are not at peace and not allowing others to be at peace. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that bugs stuck to an udder suck only blood, not milk. Similarly bug-like people suck the blood of this *satsang*. They find faults in *sadhus* and speak ill of them to oppose them. Such acts are like sucking blood. If they imbibe the virtues of those saints within themselves, it would be like drinking milk.

There are pearls in the ocean, but one cannot get them easily. The body and mind need to be sacrificed to get those precious pearls. Similarly, there are many pearls in the great sea of *Satsang*. Saints are like pearls. Total submission of body and mind results in self-realisation. There are cities, towns and villages

near the sea. Thousands of people stroll daily to the seashore. They find shells and pebbles scattered in shallow water. They collect these cheap things instead of collecting pearls. The pearls are not an easy catch. It is a most difficult task. Satsang is not an easy task. One has to work hard and with alertness. One has to do devotion, *Japa*, penance, service and practise of the religious tenets if desired to attain the pearl named benediction - emancipation.

(Lord Shree Hari is an infinite ocean of celestial pleasures. A desire free devotee begs for indifference and asceticism and worldly souls beg for the worldly pleasures of the sense objects.)

A detached soul desires the pleasures related to God, and a worldly soul begs for the pleasures of Maya - sense objects. Mankind longs for the pleasure of Maya. They crave for worldly greatness. They don't know that Maya has no pleasure - it gives only pain. The pleasures of Maya are like deadly poison. God's pleasures are sweet like sugar. Worldly souls put aside the sweetness of God and chase after bitter poison day and night. Desire free – detached - devotees are unique and unparalleled in every walk of life.

Time Has Come to Bear the Punishment

There were two Patels – Narottamdas and Nagardas. Both were respectable and rich. Narottam was proud and egotistic about his wealth, assets and intelligence. He always thought that he was the wisest and smartest amongst the people. Egotistic Narottam used to insult others with his wicked means and boastful talk. He never did devotion of God and stopped others by criticising their faith and submission. He was not afraid of God.

His sinful ways brought him to a major fall. Like a punishment, six evil spirits possessed him. Those evil spirits tormented him extremely. He lost his wisdom and intellect and acted like an animal. Evil spirits compelled him to bark at and bite others, like a wild animal. Restless Narottam lost sleep during night in extreme anxiety and like a madman he ran here and there. The evil spirits forced him to live like a restless animal. The poor soul was not able to bear the torments. They tried many doctors and medical treatments, but it only added to the pains of Narottam. Then they took him to some witchdoctors and they tried their skills, one after another, to free the soul from the tormenting possession of the evil spirits. The witchdoctors extracted huge money from him and left him uncured. He lost wealth, wisdom, ego and everything but not the ghosts! He paid heavily for his sins and spent six months in such torment and unrest:

(Pay in tears for the sins, which were committed with a smile.)

The *satsangi* residents were very sad to see the mental state of Narottam. They advised the elders of the family to take Narottam to Gadhada for blissful *darshan* of Shreeji Maharaj. Ghosts and evil spirits can't stand the presence of Shreeji Maharaj. Both the Patels liked the idea and came to Lord Shreeji Maharaj.

Lord Shreeji Maharaj was gracing an assembly of saints and devotees. The ghosts fled away with pitiable screams, as he did *darshan* of Shreeji Maharaj. Narottam wept and cried in the painful aftermath of the escaping spirits. The poor soul Narottam returned to normal state of peace, by *darshan* of the *Sabha*. Peace and tranquillity prevailed in his heart and soul.

Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan is the ocean of mercy and compassion. He welcomed him with love and took him into his benign refuge. Shree Hari blessed him by tying a Kanthi around his neck. Evil spirits have no capacity to touch a devotee who wears a Kanthi of Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan. But ensure purity and holiness of your Kanthi is maintained to prevent ghosts and evil spirits. Ghosts and evil spirits torment the man who desecrates the Kanthi. The Kanthi shall be desecrated if wine, intoxicants, garlic-onions and other such things are consumed. It shall be desecrated if opposing God and saints. Such a soul shall be consigned to the infernal regions

(Therefore, maintain asceticism with love. Maintain it respectfully. This will earn you name and fame.)

Kadavun - 19

All living beings have passed through many births – indeed millions of births and deaths, on the earth and in the other *Lokas*. The soul has travelled several times in the divine region of Kailash and heaven and has wielded divine powers of Indra as the king of deities and heavens. He has relished repeatedly the pleasure of heaven and seductive charms of heavenly damsels (*Apsara*). The soul has executed in many births the powers of a monarch, king or emperor, and in many births he was rich and wealthy to live happily. In many births he was a reader, a scholar or a singer and in many others he was an ascetic, poet or scholar.

(Though millions of births on the earth, the soul will not attain the ultimate goal of his life, if not detached absolutely).

The soul is born several times as a bird in the sky or as a living being on the earth. There is no count of such births and deaths. Since the creation of the universe, the soul has travelled non-stop from birth-to-birth and death-to-death in an endless cycle rotating continuously. The soul has changed many bodies of different kinds, shapes, sizes and categories. All these births and status' depended solely on his past *Karmas* (action). The new bodies are readily available in accordance to his actions – good or bad.

Kadavun - 20

(I have gathered the essence of everything. It is fact that the true asceticism cannot be defeated. My heart consents repeatedly that there is a non-limiting line in the sphere of divine power and pure asceticism.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that the book of Saar Siddhi is the saga of detachment and asceticism. I have thought and pondered repeatedly and concluded that there is nothing that parallels absolute detachment.

Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan says:

(Vairagya is non-attachment to everything except Lord Shree Krishna.)

Those who are attached to something other than God are weak in the foundation of *Vairagya* (detachment or non-attachment). Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami counsels extensively to strengthen fervour of detachment and asceticism.

Take Care to Fix the Nut and Bolt

Walk carefully on the path of life. Have you seen the luxury coaches of a superfast train? Those coaches are extra luxurious and most comfortable.

Furniture and fixtures like sofa, chairs, cots, a/c, carpets, curtains, all are superb and luxurious. To travel on a luxury coach is a royal pleasure. But the railway authorities are extra careful and most vigilant in regard to maintenance and fitness of the rail track. Groups of technicians and labourers are on constant vigil to check each joint of the track and each nut and bolt of the railroad. A nut and bolt, if loosen slightly, could be enough to cause a major accident derailing and smashing those super luxurious and well secured coaches.

It is true that we are all true devotees - true *satsangis* but a constant vigil is a must to ensure that no nut and bolt is loose or unfit. A constant alert is a must.

Golden jewellery needs extra safety and security. The *Satsang* – holy fellowship – is like a golden ornament and jewellery. A little lethargy or slightest carelessness may result in repulsion towards God and his devotees. Atheism, demonic intellect, repulsion to saints and fellow devotees are a few of the terrorists who force and compel us towards a fall, a devastating descent. Be careful and act with utmost alertness. Ensure that the bolt of life is not loosened to derail us from the mission of life.

(Detachment is most difficult. It is like a direct assault on your vitals. It won't allow you to live in the company of others.)

Well-understood detachment frees the soul from the shackles of Maya. There were three brothers – blood brothers, born to some parents, Shamji, Pitambar and Shobharam. Blood brothers and sisters are often similar in their inherent nature. Here in this trio, the brothers were not of the same nature. Shamji and Pitambar were virtuous and liked holy fellowship, but the third brother Shobharam liked the company of wicked people and walked on the path of sins. Shobharam used to criticise saints and God. If his brothers went to a saint to do Satsang, he would chase them to hit, and insult the saint by his indecent behaviour, but his god-fearing brothers took no notice of his misbehaviour.

The saints desired to redeem Shobharam. Once they had a long session with him to bring him into the benign fold of Satsang. They explained to him that it was not necessary for him to join Satsang, but at the same time he should not obstruct his brothers on this holy path. He should think that it was good on the part of his family that his two brothers were progressing well on the path of Satsang, despite his own shortcoming in that field. He should feel happy for his brothers. Such feelings of moral support and co-operation shall be equally rewarding like an act of devotion that may redeem him. The saints tried their best to counsel him, but Shobharam was like a block of granite, no change, and no effect. The saints too, realised this bitter truth.

They said, "Why are you so rude to your brothers? Why do you oppose and obstruct them? Share in their virtuous ways and share their virtuous fruits. If you do not stop on this path of sin, you shall be consigned to the infernal

regions of hell, and shall be punished ruthlessly by *Yama-dootas*. Therefore, this is the right time. Pull yourself together. Co-operate with your brothers and live a decent life."

But Shobharam rebuked in arrogance, "There is nothing like hell or heaven. That is a fictitious image created by you lot. You people are scaring others by such imaginary stories. I don't believe in it. Go away from here."

As the saint looked in his eyes, Shobharam slipped into instant meditational trance and landed in the darkest of hells. The *Yama-doots* surrounded him with their fearsome weapons and lurched on him from all sides, leaving no room for escape. The poor soul had to bear it helplessly. There was no end to his torment and nobody to protect or defend him. He screamed, wept and lamented for a safe escape but not even death was available. After a thorough punishment of three hours he was reduced to tattered fibres as every molecule of his body was exerting extreme pain. The saint then brought him back to waking state. As soon as he opened his eyes, he fell like a log before the lotus feet of the saints and prayed most humbly to pardon him, "O Saints! Please forgive me for my arrogance and misbehaviour. I don't think I shall be relieved from this pain coming from my bones. The torments and ruthlessness of *Yama-dootas* had broken every bone in my body. Each pour on my skin gives me unbearable pain. O Saints! Please pardon me for my sinful acts. Please receive me in your redeeming refuge. I will no longer speak badly of others. Please initiate me by giving me *Mantra-Diksha* into your holy-fellowship. Address the Guru Mantra and tie a *Kanthi* to stick to the tenets of the axiomatic religion. I am your humble servant and a humble slave of God. Please help me."

The saint wielded his divine powers to relieve the soul from the shackles of *Maya*.

Pada: 5

(It is very difficult to narrate the glory and greatness of detachment and asceticism. It takes the soul to the highest height. There shall be no room for any imperfection if detachment pervades every molecule of the body that percolates deep in the heart and soul. Detachment is like a sharp sword. It is like a well-sharpened sword, separating everything in one stroke. Worldly entanglements cannot face it.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that detachment - asceticism - is like a well-sharpened sword. Its edge is so sharp that it cuts and destroys, from the foundation, the inner enemies like ego, affection, illusion (*Maya*) and desires. The sword of detachment severs instantly the enemies in the guise of bad habits, worldly life and evil thoughts. These are the inherent attributes of detachment.

Kadavun - 21

Eternal Ocean of Infinite Joy

(Lord Shree Hari is the ocean of all pleasures.
Lord Shyam is eternally charming. Lord Shree Hari
fulfills our life. Nothing is unattainable once attained
Lord Shree Hari.)

The Supreme Lord is the ocean of eternal pleasures. If God is with you, nothing will be unattainable. Life shall be fully fulfilled in the benign presence of God. God's pleasures are divine and supreme. God is the ocean of eternal pleasure. A few drops of that pleasure are dropped on the earth. The released souls on the earth live happily by those few drops of divine pleasure.

A man permitted to sit at the royal court finds himself the happiest amongst the people. Then think of the pleasure of those people who have been received honourably in the imperial court of the king of kings – the Supreme Lord. They are the most fortunate of souls!

How does one qualify the self to receive this eternal pleasure in divine proximity of Supreme Lord? The saints have answered this question. One can attend the imperial court of the Supreme Lord by his devotion, knowledge and devotional service.

One, who sits near a fire, receives the heat of the fire; one who sits in the sun, cannot be touched by darkness. One cannot be thirsty, if near a pond. Similarly, one shall be happy forever in presence of God. God is the form of eternal pleasure. God's pleasure is divine; it cannot be compared with the other pleasures.

Kadavun - 22

(Be wise and do with love the devotion of Lord
Ghanshyam. God shall not be pleased with the
devotion if it was not from the heart and soul)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to do hearty devotion. Such soulful and hearty devotion pleases God. Hearty devotion is most fruitful. All the means and instruments fail in absence of hearty devotion. God is hungry for selfless love; he is not hungry for food.

God Surrenders to Selfless Love

Kashiram Bhagat of Vadatal was a humble devotee of Lord Hari. He was a dedicated servant of Lord Shree Hari. Though very rich in divine wealth, he was very poor in worldly wealth. His life was like Sudama, poor in terms of money but very rich in spiritual wealth and selfless love. He wished always to present *thaal* to Shreeji Maharaj, but there was nothing in the home to prepare a *thaal* for

God. What could he do? What could he offer? He consulted with his wife. She was a virtuous woman, devoted to God and devotion. She said, "Don't worry. The problem is about providing a quality meal. What ever we eat, we shall offer the same as *thaal* to God." She cooked with love the loaves of *kodara* (a coarse grain) and *daal* of *mutt* (a cheap lentil), and asked her husband to take the *thaal* for Lord Shree Hari. Kashiram was bit confused in regard to the suitability of the *thaal*. How could he present such a cheap meal as *thaal*? It would be an insult to His Lordship.

At the same time, Mukund Brahmchari prayed to Maharaj, "O Lord! *Thaal* is ready. Please come to take the meal." Lord Shree Hari was in his chamber in the temple and Mukund Brahmchari was inviting him to have the meal. Shreeji Maharaj looked at him and said, "I am tired of having sweet dishes cooked here. Today, I don't want to eat your *thaal*. I would like to have meals at the house of Kashiram Bhagat." God surrendered to selfless love and ran to the house of his devotee to have meals from Kashiram Bhagat.

Shreeji Maharaj came to the house of Kashiram and knocked on the door. Kashiram answered the knock and opened the door. He saw Shree Hari stood in front of him. He saluted humbly and welcomed Maharaj heartily to his modest dwellings. He spread a torn quilt on a *charpoi* and requested Shree Hari to grace it. Shree Hari sat there happily and said, "Bhagat! I am very hungry. Give me something to eat." He brought the plate of *kodara* loaf and *mutt-daal* and presented it to Lord Shree Hari. Shreeji Maharaj took it happily and admired its taste. He told him that he was bored of having sweet dishes and was hungry for a simple and tasty meal like the one served by his darling devotees. Shreeji Maharaj thanked him for fulfilling his wish.

There was no limit to devotional pleasure of Kashiram. He was very happy with this devotional service. Such hearty devotional service becomes divine and sublime. Forget the pleasures of the present life. Forsake it forever. The soul had enjoyed such pleasures and had enjoyed much better in the millions of births of the past. Now forsake the present pleasures in the name of Lord Shree Hari. Worldly people are used to saying - why should they do devotion now? It would be fine if we did it in old age! This is absurd and irrational:

(In old age, you will not be able to do devotion. Wealth and luxuries shall be difficult to be forsaken in your old age. Life is not for long, do devotion right now, do devotion with love.)

No Marriage, No Empire!

In ancient times, emperor Sagar ruled the empire of greater India. Sagar had sixty thousand sons. He lost all of them in their untimely death. Their souls

roamed on the earth in want of redemption and emancipation. Great Rishis advised the emperor to do penance to please heavenly river Ganga as the Holy touch of sacred river Ganga, emancipates deceased souls. King Sagar entrusted this great task to his son. He ruled the empire after his marriage, and got an heir born by his queen. He then retired to the forest at an appropriate time by entrusting the empire to his son. He did penance for the rest of his life and died. Thus the ordeal of prince-hood, marriage, monarchy and penance, continued for six successive generations but the penance turned futile. The Holy River Ganga was not pleasing by them despite the penance of six generations. Then in seventh generation, King Bhagiratha did objective evaluation of the efforts and circumstances. He found that all his ancestors had assigned a top priority to their marriage, monarchy, progeny and lineage. Nobody had assigned top priority to the penance. He made firm resolution to assign top priority to the penance and assigned similar priority to please goddess Ganga by forsaking lesser important duties. King Bhagiratha forsook everything to do penance in the seclusion of the forest and hills.

He did most difficult penance for many years. He maintained detachment, asceticism and celibacy. Concentrating firmly in the divine form of Lord Shree Hari dwelling in his heart, Gangaji responded to his single-minded devotion and penance. He earned the pleasure of Ganga and brought her to his sixty thousand ancestors to emancipate them. The souls were redeemed and emancipated. King Bhagiratha fulfilled the wishes of his elders, by his asceticism and penance.

We have enjoyed the pleasures of every kind in our millions of past births. Now in this present birth, we should rededicate ourselves in devotion and meditation to God. Be detached and redeem yourself.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to do devotion without loss of time. We should act sincerely at the will of God:

(We should act as per the free will of God. We should forsake personal liking and disliking. We should surrender absolutely to Shree Hari by forsaking other supports.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to live as per the will of God - obey the orders of Lord Shree Hari. Follow the teachings and preachings of the saints. Discard your mental reservations. Control your body and mind to act as per the pleasure of God and his saints.

Once upon a time, Shreeji Maharaj graced the princely state of Kariyani to bless his devotee Vasta Khachar. Shreeji Maharaj graced the *darbar* and blessed his devotee. Vasta Khachar prayed with folded hands, "O Lord! O Maharaj! Please bless us with your holy company and dwell here for tonight."

Maharaj said, "I am in a hurry. I can't stay for tonight. Festive *Samaiyas* are approaching soon. Thousands of devotees are to be assembled in Vadtal. I

have to be there to look after them. It is better you accompany us in this religious tour of Vadtal. Indeed you shall benefit by darshan of *Samaiya* rituals, saints and devotees. Come and join us at Vadtal."

Considering his own impediments, Vasta Khachar prayed, "Maharaj! My Lord! I may not be able to attend it immediately. I am not free these days. New rooms have been constructed and roofing tiles have to be fixed before the rainy season. This is the right time to finish the work. Please bear with me."

Shreeji Maharaj said, "These are routine chores of a householder. That may also continue simulataneously. It is better for you to join us."

Vasta Khachar submitted, "Maharaj! I will come after this assignment. Let me finish this first. I am unable to join you right now."

Shreeji Maharaj left for Vadtal with his retinue. Untimely stormy rains poured heavily the next morning and the rooms constructed by Vasta Khachar, collapsed in the rainstorm. The ordeal of reconstruction started instantly and took many days and weeks. Vasta Khachar missed the *samaiya* rituals of Vadtal and spent his labour reconstructing the collapsed rooms. Shreeji Maharaj performed *Samaiya* at Vadtal and came back to Kariyani in his return tour to Gadhada. Shreeji Maharaj graced again the Darbar of Vasta Khachar and blessed his devotee. Shreeji Maharaj received happily the welcome salute and said to Vasta Khachar, "O Darbar! Why did you not attend the *samaiya*?"

"Maharaj! My new rooms collapsed in the stormy rain. Eventhough it was not really the time of the rainy season, it poured heavily and ruined my labour, money and time. I was compelled to stay back and reconstruct the rooms with proper roofing."

Shreeji Maharaj said "The rain God – Indra – rebuked to your disobedience to my orders. It was actually the fury of Lord Indra – not the stormy rain which caused this. It had thrown on you the heavy burden of expenditure, and compelled you to work like a donkey. You have missed the lifetime opportunity of divine *darshan*. Thus, you are at loss, both ways. You have missed this devotional opportunity and lost your new rooms inclusive of labour and money. You have paid twice for your house. Think wisely and act in accordance to time. That is the main attribute of a true devotee. What are you to do now?"

Vasta Khachar said, "Maharaj! This is my mistake. I am very sorry." The moral of the story is – devout soul Vasta Khachar failed to act as per the will of God. Since time immemorial, the soul acts as per his free will and mental whims. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says: Discard mental and physical whims and surrender absolutely at the refuge of Lord Shree Hari:

(Discard physical and mental reservations, and
surrender absolutely at the lotus feet of God.)

Kadavun - 23

(Think wisely. Devotion is best in this world.
Conceal this redeeming truth in your heart. Act
readily at an appropriate time and do devotion.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami describes here the majesty and glory of devotion. It is a spectacular view of devotion. Do devotion, but do it with wisdom and understanding. Do it bravely and alertly in accordance to time.

Excuses like heat and cold in *poojan* (worship) of God should not be tolerated. Be firm and follow the tenets of devotion and worship of God. Set aside all excuses.

An aged Guru said to his disciple saints, "It is time to sleep. Put out the lamp, to save the oil." The disciple was lazy. He disliked getting up from his cosy bed. Instead of putting out the lamp, he asked his Guru to cover his eyes to avoid the light of the lamp. After some time, the Guru said, "My child! Is it raining? Go and check."

The disciple said from his bed, "That cat near you has come from outside. Put your hand on it. It is raining if the cat is wet."

The Guru then ordered him a third time, "My Child! The doors are open. Go and shut the doors."

The disciple argued, "O My Guru! I have accomplished two of your assignments. Now you accomplish the third." What would be the final outcome, if God gets such a devotee or a Guru gets such a disciple or a father gets such a son?

(A true devotee never looks for personal
comfort in service of God. For him, dedicated service
is the perennial source of eternal pleasure.)

Don't consider your pains, if desiring to do devotional service. Discharge all duties to the best of your abilities, like a faithful servant. What are the ethical duties of a true servant of God? To act at the free will of Lord Shree Hari, shall be the prime duty of a true servant of God. What does 'service' mean? Selfless acts are service. The assignments accomplished with unselfish love are service. The service executed without love or faith is called slavery.

Great care and attention are a must for faithful service. The service should be submitted with due obedience and in accordance to time. Oven fresh meals should be served at an appropriate time and with due decorum. Attires, ornaments and garlands should conform to the season and circumstances. In winter days, wet and cold flower garlands should not be served to God. Warm attires should be adorned in winter, and super fine cotton dresses should be adorned in summer.

Seasonal vegetables should be served for wholesome meals. Raw vegetables and food grains should be cleaned and washed properly before

processing in the kitchen. *Thaal* should be arranged properly with absolute care for its sanctity. The *thaal* should be served with due decorum, by presenting salutation, prayer and *thaal Aarti*. The kinds of *kirtans* to be presented for the service of God need to be chosen carefully. The *kirtans* to be presented early in the morning shall be quite different from the *kirtans* to be presented in the evenings. Service like massaging and pressing of the feet should be offered most humbly with absolute dedication. The time schedule should be maintained properly in offering this service.

I Shall be Happier if You.....

The temple of Lord Gopinathji was being constructed at Gadhpur. Lord Shreeji Maharaj himself looked after its construction. A large number of masons, sculptors and labours were hired for the construction work. Their salaries were overdue. There was an acute shortage of funds. He himself is the Lord of Goddess Lakshmi and therefore, there would be no shortage of money for his works. All eight major attainments (*ashta siddhis*) and the nine great foundations (*nav needhis*) are at his service to follow his orders. Heavenly treasurer Kuber could submit heaps of wealth if God desired so, but Shreeji Maharaj plays at such times, divine *leelas* to expand the scope of the devotional ways.

Once however, there came a devotee to submit *thaal* to Lord Shree Hari and His saints. He saluted Shree Hari and submitted reverently rupees three hundred in cash. He prayed in reverence, "Maharaj! My Lord! I wish to offer *thaal* to the saints at the shrine. Please consent to my prayer."

Shreeji Maharaj said in sheer compassion, "My Child! Don't give *thaal* at present. The wages of labourers are overdue. Let this be distributed as wages. Bhagat said, "Maharaj! I want to donate the *thaal* to the saints, nothing else."

Shreeji Maharaj said, "Bhagat! I would be happier if you donate it towards their wages. It would be better than offering the *thaal*. There would be no problem in such adjustment."

Bhagat said, "Maharaj! My resolute shall not be fulfilled by such adjustment. I wish only to donate the *thaal*." Shreeji Maharaj tried his best, but that stubborn devotee refused to agree. He did in accordance to his whims, and paid no heed to the wish of God!

Our devotional services are of no use, if our mind loiters here and there and acts in accordance to personal whims. Shreeji Maharaj himself has said that he dwells visibly and eternally in the idols installed by himself.

Below is a true episode, when Shree Hari spoke from the image of Lord Narnarayandev installed by him, in the temple at Bhuj Dhaam.

God is Present Forever in the Idols.

A householder devotee came back to his home country with his hard-earned wealth. In his homeward journey, he visited the house of his brother-in-law to meet his sister after many long years overseas. He handed over his savings to his sister to protect it, and spent the whole day with them.

The sister was tempted by the wealth. Greed and desire pushed her on the path of sin. At midnight, she consulted with her husband to find out a way to pocket the money herself. Her husband was a god-fearing soul. He advised her to discard such disgusting thoughts. But she insisted for it and came forward with an idea to kill her own brother. Her husband was a kind-hearted man. He said, "He is your brother. He is fond of you. It would be a major sin if you killed him. Please, control yourself." In the lust for money, she lost her wisdom and killed her own brother with an axe. She hid the dead body in a heap of hay. A sin always speaks loudly for itself. A sinner cannot hide it for long:

(A sin committed in the darkness of the night, either in public or most secretly, will speak loudly in this world or in the other world.)

As time passed, she repented a lot for her sinful crime. She hated her own self for killing her own brother. Shame, sorrow and anxiety overpowered her. She almost broke under the weight of her sin. Now she desired to wash off the sin by an appropriate atonement. She thought to do *punya* to discard the sin. She came to Bhuj to present *thaal* to Lord Narnarayandev, with the money of the deceased brother. She came to the temple and offered *thaal*. The celibate chief cook prepared the dishes and presented the *thaal* to Lord Narnarayandev. Lord Narnarayandev pushed it away. Delicious dishes fell down and scattered on the floor. God repeatedly did this for three days. The celibate chief cook was taken aghast by such displeasure of Lord Narnarayandev. Lord Narnarayandev spoke to his celibate, "O Celibate! This is not your fault. That wicked lady had killed her own brother in her extreme greed. Now to hide her major sin, she has come here to offer me a *thaal*. I will not consume meals from such sinners. Have again a purifying bath, sanctify your cooking place and cook pure and sacred meals. I will take *thaal* only then."

The *brahmchari* followed the order of Lord Narnarayandev and offered fresh and pure *thaal* to Lord Narnarayandev. The Supreme Lord accepted it happily. The sinful lady repented greatly when she learn't of this episode.

The core of the teaching is - God receives personally the presents and gifts from a devotee, if he submits it with pure heart and selfless love. God dwells eternally in the idols made from metals, stones or other suitable material. Do devotion with love.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, 'It shall be a wasteful act, like pounding the bran, if a devotee performs *pooja* and devotion without any love or affection for God. Grains cannot be extracted from the bran. Similarly, divine bliss and pleasure cannot emanate, if we take an idol to be a mere statue.'

The butter oil is hidden in every molecule of milk, but the milk will not give the taste of butter oil. God too dwells with us, like butter oil in the milk. To extract the butter oil, one has to make curd from the milk. He has to churn the curd to extract and separate butter from it. One has to heat the butter to purify it

as butter oil. Similarly, to attain God dwelling in every molecule, one has to make the curd named *Bhakti* (devotion) with the help of detachment. The churn of 'unbroken meditation' should churn and set well, the curd of the Bhakti. The butter named 'ultimate knowledge' should be separated. The butter of knowledge should be heated in the fire of self-constraint. God shall be realised only then by the butter oil of 'meditational concentration'. This is the proper procedure of devotion and devotional ways. One who followed this, attains eternal pleasure of God. God is with us in his visible form.

.....
(When the elephant is no more, the tusk still exists. But the tusk cannot break the fort and the gates. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to test the devotion of God.)
.....

Once, there was a robust elephant in a Kingdom. It was big like a hill and strong like steel. The King used it in battle. As and when the kingdom was invaded, the elephant would be sent to the opposite army to crush the soldiers and defeat the enemy. Thus the kingdom and royal army were safe due to the great elephant. They spent many years in safety and secured environment, but the elephant caught some disease and died instantly. The king, soldiers and subjects were taken aback by such sudden death of the elephant.

The King was worried about the security of his kingdom. The elephant was no more to fight a war. The royal court discussed the issue and thought about alternative arrangements to safeguard the interests of the state. The elephant was no longer there to fight for them. An overly wise courtier suggested, "O My Lord! Your highness! Here is a humble submission. The elephant is dead, but its tusks are still with us. We should place the tusks at the front of the army to fight the war. It will win the war for us."

Is it possible for a tusk to fight and finish the enemies? The *poorja* and devotion, done without devotional fervour of the real form of God (visible form of God) would be like a tusk sent to fight the battle. Only a real elephant could do it, not a tusk.

There would be victory, only if the elephant is a real elephant and is there to fight for us. Mere tusks at the battlefield can't be of any help. In Lord Shree Hari's divine presence, the *satsang* was like butter oil – solid, pure and wholesome. Then in the following decades, it became like butter – not so solid or pure. Then it was reduced to the level of curd – almost raw and unrefined and at present, contemporary Satsang looks like butter milk – without substance, less nutrient and liquidised. If a *satsang sabha* is held, it would be attended well by the devotees, but the number of true devotees would be very few amongst them. The devotional fervour has lost its intensity and depth. It has become superficial, just a show of lesser intensity and greater show of vocal notoriety in humiliating and insulting the saints and faithful devotees. Contemporary *satsang* is interested more in finding faults in faithful *satsangis* and detached saints. They

feel honoured if praised for their ego, status, wealth or power. As we saints understand, nobody is at fault for the present state of affairs. This is nothing but an impact of place and time.

Pada: 6

(A worshipper of the abstract form will not be at peace, in the heat of the burning flames. He will not realise the fullness of his lifetime attainments. He will live in uncertainty and doubt.)

This is a wonderful song. The fire of desires cannot be extinguished by the devotion of *Paroksha* (abstract and invisible.)

(Gita: 2.59)

(The desires of the sense objects prevail despite restricting the sense organs, but the sense organs discard the tastes of the sense objects when the soul tastes the supreme taste of devotion and concentrates meditatively on it.)

If not consumed externally, the five sense objects and mind consume it internally in itself and he thinks constantly about the sense objects and its tastes. The mind indulges in it continuously without any break. The soul cannot live for a second without the sense objects. The eyes consume beauty and charms. The ears consume speech and sounds. The skin consumes touch. The nose consumes smell of various kinds. The tongue consumes taste of various kinds.

We cannot see properly the things that are kept in a dark room. We get only an idea of it, a distant idea of its existence but not the complete knowledge of it. When light illuminates the room and every object in the room, we realise each object perfectly. Enlightening realisation is possible if the soul has devotional love in the visible form of God. Absolute faith (*nishtha*) is a spiritual state, wherein the soul lives in the eternal presence of God. A faithful devotee never doubts the acts of God. Torment, ailment, losses or adverse time cannot shake his trust and faith in God. He never blames God for his misfortune.

A faithful devotee believes firmly in the redemptive attributes of God. His mind is firm and steadfast in the most adverse of times.

Kadavun - 25

(Be religious in your speech, sight and indeed all your acts. Live religiously in all three states.)

To be religious in our speech means, not to speak bad words, not to hurt others by our speech, not to indulge in rustic dialogue. Intoxication of power

makes one blind and senseless forcing us to insult the poor or the underprivileged. Such people are not religious. Their speech acts like a saw and their words are like arrows. To be ethical whilst seeing would require disciplining of our eyes. Maintain decorum and modesty of women when you accompany them. Woman should maintain modesty and distance when they accompany a man. Don't look here and there when you walk, and walk steadily with downcast vision. Physical and mental purity is a must when cooking meals. Serve the meals first to God, and thereafter have it as *Prasadam*. These are the ethical ways of speaking, talking, walking and living.

A single draft of alcohol consigns a soul to hell for ten thousand years. Religion should not be discarded even in a state of acute embarrassment:

(Religion or ethical duties should't be overlooked, neither in grief nor in pleasure. Don't ignore your ethical duties, even in acute embarrassment. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to be firm in our ethical duties.)

I am a Worthy Son of India

Emperor Aurangzeb was a merciless ruler. He committed sins and killed thousand of people to expand his religion - Islam. He compelled his subjects to mass conversion and killed those who refused. He was a mountain of sin.

Chhatrapati Shivaji is a famous king of Maharashtra. He had protected Hindus and the Hindu religion in such adverse time. His subjects loved him for his selfless service. The army of Aurangzeb arrested Shivaji's son – Sambhaji. They took him to Emperor Aurangzeb and compelled him to accept Islam. Emperor Aurangzeb tried to bribe him by marrying him to his daughter and tempted him by offering kingdom and lordship.

The worthy son of mother India – Sambhaji - refused to accept Islam, princess and monarchy. He preferred death instead of conversion. He said, "O selfish King! O fallen one! Remember it well. I am the son of Chhatrapati Shivaji. Hinduism is my mother. I am the son of mother India. I don't want to marry your daughter. I am ready to die for my religion!"

Aurangzeb roared in anger, "Who are you to disobey me? I will kill you." His soldiers pinned the body of Sambhaji, pierced his eyes with hot pokers of steel and tortured him to death." Brave Sambhaji sacrificed his life for the cause of religion. We salute him for his faith and valour. A truly religious man will adhere to his ethical duties even in the most adverse of times.

Kadavun – 26, 27

(It is unlawful and most rejectable if we were to obtain land, wealth, son, pleasures or wife by

deserting ethical duties (religion). Kingdom, wealth and greatness would be burned to ashes if obtained whilst deserting ethical duties.)

One should not desert religion even if we were to obtain wealth, pleasure and greatness in doing so. Adhere to your ethical duties at all costs. Protect religion for your own protection. A body without vital air would be a dead corpse. Religion is the vital air for us. A man without religion (ethical duties) is dead like a log. Just as the body is sustained by the soul, the soul is sustained by religion. The life that is not wedded to ethical duties is shameful.

There may be a time when one could obtain wealth by disowning his religion. He may be reduced to extreme poverty like a beggar, if he adhered to his ethical duties. What should he do in such case? Should he pocket the money or opt for begging? Lord Shree Hari answers this:

Believe yourself to be the wealthiest, even if reduced to begging, due to your ethical duties, because as the great Rishis have said, religion is the greatest wealth. Such people who took religion to be their greatest wealth are the happiest now and will be the happiest eternally.

Religion is the heart of God. God was born to the family of Dharma to reinstall the axiomatic religion. Saints are helpful in maintaining ethical duties therefore always submit to the holy company of saints.

Kadavun – 28

(God loves his religious minded devotees. Subjugate your sense organs and body in the presence of pleasurable objects. Bear equally the pleasures and pains. Don't allow your mind to roam elsewhere. Don't forget this!)

Assign top priority to ethical duties. God loves such religious minded devotees. All *satsangis* like to be loved by God. We all desire to be famous and respectable when we see other famous people. We also desire from him a friendly gesture and like to be in his good books! This is human nature. None upon the earth is greater than God. Therefore we should desire to earn his pleasure. We should try earnestly to be in his good books. A devotee can earn the pleasure of God by obeying God's orders. A devotee can earn the pleasure of his Guru by following the orders of his Guru. A son earns the pleasure of his father and mother by obeying their wishes. A woman earns the pleasure of her husband by following his instructions. A servant earns the pleasure of his master by obeying his orders. Similarly, a devotee would earn the pleasure of God, by following the orders of God.

Act as per the pleasure of God. Subjugate your sense organs and its pleasure and bear equally the pleasures and pains to please Lord Shree Hari. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says:

(Be obedient to his orders and act in accordance to his free will. Don't doubt in the ways of God. Do service with absolute faith and trust.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says merge yourself in the holy service of God. The three things; selfless love, firm faith and trust, are a must in your service to God.

I Consider Only Faith and Trust

Eternal pilgrim Narada was on pilgrimage of the divine abode Vaikuntha. On his way to Vaikuntha, he passed through a dense forest. There, under a tamarind tree he found two aspirants doing penance to realise God. They called Narada, when they saw him passing by there. Narada stopped near them and blessed them with success in their penance. They prayed to Narada, "O Great Rishi! O eternal visitor of the divine abodes of God! Please visit the divine abode of Bhagwan and find out when Lord Shree Hari is to favour us by his blissful darshan."

Rishi Narada came to the divine abode Vaikuntha and did *darshan* of the Lord. With a humble salute, he prayed to the Lord, "O Supreme Lord! O sustainer of universe! Two aspirants on the earth are engaged in your penance beneath a tree in the forest. When are you to favour them with your blissful *darshan*?"

God said, "O Narada! The tree beneath which they do *tapa* is a tamarind tree with lots of leaves in its canopy of branches. They will have to do *tapa* for many thousands of years, infact ten thousand years for each leaf of the tamarind tree!"

Rishi Narada came back to the earth and delivered this message of God. Both the aspirants received the message with utmost eagerness and enthusiasm, but one of the aspirants, lost his enthusiasm and hope, when he counted the years to be spent in penance. He concluded that God was not willing to favour him with his *darshan*, which is why God suggests a long period of billions of years. He stopped the penance and left the place immediately.

The other one was firm in his ethical duties and penance. He found the message positive and gathered that God was willing to bless him with his *darshan*. He was very happy to hear this good news. Almighty supreme Lord loved the faith and trust of his true devotee and manifested himself instantly in front of the devout aspirant. The aspirant rose from his penance and with folded hands he submitted himself humbly at the lotus feet of God. The devotee prayed in devotional fervour, "O Maharaj! O My Lord! I feel so fulfilled by your redeeming *darshan*. O God! Bless me with the eternal peace of your divine abode."

Naradji was taken aback by such sudden manifestation. He prayed, "O Lord! You too have learnt the art of lying." When I enquired with you in your divine abode, you showed me a long period of billions of years for your

proposed *darshan* to these aspirants. Now, you are here in no time to favour this devotee by your redeeming *darshan*? It would have been better of you, if you had told me this before. One aspirant had terminated his penance due to your lie!”

The Supreme Lord said, “O Narada! *Tapa, Japa* or *Dhyana* are not important for me. I consider devotional fervour, faith and trust of an aspirant to be much more important”:

(Gita: 4.39)

(The aspirant, who has dedicated himself to ultimate knowledge and has restrained his sense organs, holds the capacity to receive divine knowledge. He attains eternal bliss by attaining ultimate knowledge of the divine.)

A devotee attains ultimate knowledge through his faith and trust in God. He attains *parampada* (eternal state) through his supreme virtues. Accomplishments are quicker through firm faith and trust. A new *satsangi* would stand far ahead in the entire *satsang* if he has firm faith and great trust in God and His saints.

(Sit tight if asked to sit, stand up if asked to do so. Walk faithfully, if asked to walk. Leave instantly without hesitation, if ordered to do so by God or his saints. Speak if asked to do so, stay back faithfully if asked by the saint to do so. There is nothing beyond such orders, not even the *paap* and the *punyas*.)

Act instantly at the supreme will of God. Follow the orders of the senior saints.

Shreeji Maharaj tested the ego of Maganiram. Shreeji Maharaj said “Maganiram! Carry on your head the shoes of the saints and do five *Pradakshina* of this *Satsang-Sabha*. I will initiate you into sainthood because of your ego free life.”

Maganiram followed the order without ego and did five *pradakshina* of the assembly with a large bundle of shoes on his head. He then submitted politely, “Maharaj! Please receive me in your benign refuge.”

Shreeji Maharaj said, “Your *Jata* (bun of hair) is very large. Separate it from your head and leave it on the path of the saints visiting the river for sacred bathing and establish your freedom from ego. Maganiram was in need of God’s refuge and sainthood. He was ready for any kind of test. He obeyed instantly and threw his *Jata* on the path of the saints to have it crushed under the sacred feet of the saints. Shreeji Maharaj accepted him happily in his holy fellowship and initiated *Bhagwati Deeksha* and sainthood with the new name ‘Advaitananad

Swami'. One, who is in need of God, will do anything and everything to attain God.

(Many talk a lot about religion or ethical duties. Religion is profound and subtle. No religion or ethical duty is greater than that of obedience to the visible form of God.)

To follow the orders of God, who is before us in his visible form, is the true religion and ethical duty for us. Be firm and faithful in your ethical duties, despite adverse time and place.

(Religion is the seat of all pleasures. Take good care of your ethical duties. Saints have earned pleasure and happiness through their ethical duties. They live as per the orders of Lord Shree Hari.)

Religion is the seat of eternal pleasure. Take good care of religion. Those who are happy have earned such happiness through ethical duty – religion. *Bagamanaa Bor* (a kind of fruit) looks red like a ripe fruit in the winter cold, but its ripeness is only skindeep as the *bor* is actually raw and sour when eaten. There are many religions on the earth that resemble those red *bor* – the have only skindeep sweetness! The axiomatic Hindu religion is supreme and unique among the religions of the world. There is an endless list of virtues, but the virtue of ethical duties is supreme amongst them.

Those who practise ethical duties are called religious souls. To wash the body, to do *pooja*, to read scriptures, to print *tilak chandlo* or to wear a *kanthi* are treated as attributes of a religious soul by worldly wise people. These are deemed to be various components of religion. True religion reflects in the fullness of human life – an ideal lifestyle. It is most subtle. To exploit the poor and needy and extract money from them is not a religious act.

Can You Bear the Burden of the Farm?

There was one old lady, poor and needy. She had a disabled daughter. The mother and daughter lived through mutual support. They sustained their living by the crop produced in their field near the village. The field was small but the land was fertile. This small but fertile field tempted the landlord. The landlord wished to snatch away the field from that old lady. He knew that there would be nobody from the village to support that old woman. He threatened her to surrender the field, and warned her of dire consequences if she spoke anything of this to the neighbours and villagers. The poor lady surrendered the field and said with tears in her eyes, "O Master! You may take my field, but allow me to collect a basketful of soil from my field." The landlord allowed her to do so happily. She came to the field with a large basket and collected the soil of the farm in that basket.

She requested the landlord to lend a hand to put the basket on her head. The landlord saw the basket of soil filled up to the brim. He said to her, "the basket is very heavy. It cannot be lifted easily and if placed on your head, you will surely be crushed under the weight of it. It is not possible to carry such a heavy load."

She replied back to the lord, "If it is not possible for me to carry a basketful of soil from the field, then how would it be possible for you to carry the weight of the whole farm? Will it be possible to digest such a major sin? Think again and tell me, is it possible to be happy by inflicting pains and torments to others? I will tolerate it with a heavy heart, but God's displeasure will not spare you. You can't buy pleasures by selling pains to others. There will be a day, when there shall be nobody to stand by you to wipe your tears of pain, but still there is time to correct your behaviour."

The landlord realised his misdeed and said in a soft tone, "Mother! It is your field. You are the owner. I will not touch it. Be happy and do devotion."

A true religious man helps others in their adverse times; he never omits his ethical duties. He is a true devout soul.

Kadavun – 29

(Great Rishis, saints and aspirants desire utmost in their heart to follow the orders of God. The devotional service and the orders of the visible Lord are most precious for true aspirants.)

The opportunity to serve, by following the orders of God is the most sought after fortune of human life. One should avail each moment of devotional service and holy-fellowship by obeying the orders of God and the saints. Such an opportunity should not be missed at any cost:

Don't Miss the Opportunity

God is kind and merciful to the world and mankind. God has showered abundant mercy and compassion to protect mankind through eternal peace. The means like devotion and holy-fellowship take the soul into the benign refuge of the supreme Lord. We can live in the proximity of God by means of devotion and meditational worship. It is our misfortune that as ignorant souls, we are missing such opportunity by our indulgence in sense objects and its temporary pleasures.

There are lots of monkeys in the region of Gokul-Mathura. You need to be extra careful in your pilgrimage of this area. The monkeys may snatch away your precious belongings, if they found them to be neglected. The monkeys would snatch swiftly and jumps to the highest branch of a tallest tree, a money-purse, ornaments, clothes or anything, if found neglected. Those things are precious for you, but they are like a toy for the monkey. You cannot chase or

catch the monkey. The monkey is very smart in his manoeuvres. Ornaments and other precious things are of no use to the monkey. If you offer a hand full of grams, the monkey will throw away the things from his hand to come down quickly to have the grams. In comparison to ornaments, grams are very cheap and negligible but the baser instinct of the monkey compels the animal to throw away the precious ornaments for the want of tasty grams.

We too are like that monkey, throwing away the most precious-to-have things for cheaper sense objects. Just as a monkey lives happily with a handful of grams, we too are happy and content by our small belongings like family, house, fields, business and money! We have thrown away the most precious thing, to have these basic sense objects. Devotion and this holy-fellowship are the most precious things and we have abandoned it like a monkey. Think and act wisely.

(A female peacock conceives a male peacock when it catches with her bill the tears rolled off from the eyes of a wooing peacock. The teardrops she picked up from the ground conceive a female young.)

A courting peacock spreads its feathers like a colourful canopy and dances with his spouse. The female peacock catches in her bill the teardrops rolled off from the eyes of peacock. These tears would conceive a male peacock young. If the female peacock picked up the tears fallen on the ground, those drops would conceive a female young. A devotee should catch the words of God, and should follow it instantly. A devotee is not supposed to pick and choose. He is required to catch it whole without any omission or change.

Kadavun - 30

(I did *darshan* of my Lord and saw him tip to toe, by viewing most attentively each of his charms. I have installed Him happily in the seat of my heart. I need nothing other than Him.)

A true devotee should do *darshan* of the image of God, and should do it most attentively by concentrating meditatively on every part and limb of his blissful image. It enables a devotee to restrict his cognitive senses and mind to concentrate meditatively in the visible image of God. Lord Shreeji Maharaj has helped his devout disciples by installing a unique tradition of *Mansi-Pooja* (mental worship). A *Satsangi* is required to do *Mansi-Pooja*, five times a day. *Mansi-Pooja* helps the devotee to discipline his mind. It provides more time for meditational concentration. Early morning meditational concentration strengthens one's spiritual power and purifies our mind and cognitive organs. God remembers us for the whole of the day and takes good care of us, by merely performing early morning meditational concentration of just a few minutes.

Belief is great and Supreme

A devout soul, though not so literate, should be respected as a *Gyani* (enlightened one), if he realises God. Knowledge, education, speech nor literacy are needed at all by a soul to be a *Gyani* (enlightened soul). One-to-one relations with God enlighten the soul by the divine power of God. Such devout souls are *Gyanis*. God dwells eternally in the heart of such a person to shower his blissful pleasure. Such *Gyanis* have forgotten the world and the ephemeral pleasures. To learn by heart a few stanzas or a few *shlokas*, to deliver a speech, to sing a few *kirtans* or to describe a few episodes in an assembly, are not the attributes of a true *Gyani*. *Gyanis* live in luminosity of ultimate knowledge – knowledge of the supreme.

A scholar came to a saint. He awoke the saint and said, "Mahatmaji! O saint! You are good at giving discourses and lectures. Please teach me to deliver lectures and speeches like yourself."

The saint said, "My child! This is not learnt from anybody. Whatever I deliver and the way in which it is delivered, was not I, but my heart, on inspiration from Shree Hari."

The scholar said, "I have given many discourses and they have also been given by other great scholars, but audiences have never applaud the speeches of those great orators! I always receive a grand applause after my speech. If they did it lightly, I appeal to them to receive it with a thundering applause!"

The saint thought that the poor soul was arrested by ego and false pride. He likes self-praise. He would learn oratory skills only to further his ego and

false pride! His speeches are not for enlightening others, but for strengthening his own ego and pride. People born with such inherent nature believe themselves to be most enlightened. If some ascetics got by chance, a couple of disciples, they would believe themselves to be a great saint. He finds himself above those who are great, because such disciples have praised and admired his knowledge and vision. In real terms, this cannot be called enlightenment or knowledge. Whatever they deliver is mere information – data. It is just mechanical output.

The scripture of Saar Siddhi is a mighty adventure to establish one-to-one relations between a devotee and his God. Each stanza and every word in this great scripture, narrates the divine majesty of God.

Kadavun - 31

(If a true devotee looks at the lotus feet of God,
he sees it constantly noticing the symbols on footsole;
he looks constantly at the symbol. If he saw his nails,
he would gaze at it without winking. He is like a fish
sporting in the deep water of a lake.)

A fish likes to live in the deep waters. A true devotee likes meditational concentration of the divine image of God. He loves such mental state. There are sixteen auspicious symbols on footsole of Lord Shree Hari. Concentrate on each symbol, limb, and nail to merge your subtle being into the blissful image of God. Absorb the divine image in the core of your heart.

Meditational concentration is an important aspect of single-minded devotion. It is devotion at a higher level. The mind roams here and there in absence of concentration. Meditational concentration is a must to install God at the seat of one's heart. Meditational worship may be performed at anytime morning, noon, afternoon, evening or at night. Do it at least once everyday. Look at the image of God. You may concentrate meditatively at the face, lotus feet, or at any other limb of God. Form a habit of such steady *darshan*. You may begin with one minute duration and progress steadily day after day to concentrate for five, ten or fifteen minutes. Do mental *Japa* of 'Swaminarayan' during your meditational concentration. You will realise God when his image sits steadily in the seat of your heart. Don't be hasty, don't lose patience, do it most religiously. This is the preferred way of meditation.

(A true devotee is steady fast in his meditation.
He never withdraws from the image of God. He is
like a river that flows steadily towards the sea.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami gives the example of a river that flows steadily towards the sea. The river flows in full force and flows directly to the sea. Rocks, stones, trees and plants are not able to obstruct the path of a flowing river. The river takes them with her and breaks them to pieces if they try to obstruct her path. The river itself paves the path for her journey to the sea and does not stop until she merges into the sea. A true devotee acts like a river in his pilgrimage to God's abode. The obstacles like grief, sorrow, pleasure, happiness, insults, praise, gains, loss or torments are not able to stop him in his pilgrimage. He walks through them to merge himself into the divine image of God. He likes and loves only God, nothing else. Such a delusion free soul is a true *Gyani* (enlightened soul).

Kadavun - 32

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami describes here the majesty of a true saint:

The blissful pleasure of a saint cannot be compared with anything, not even the *Kamdhenu* (divine cow), *Kalpataru* (heavenly tree), *Navnidhi* (nine kinds of eternal foundations), *Ashta Siddhi* (eight supreme attainments), *Parasmani* (touch stone), *Chintamani* (wish fulfilling stone), *Arkamani* (sun stone) or *Indumani* (moon stone), because the fruits and rewards granted by these are not everlasting. Where as, holy fellowship and holy company of a saint results in everlasting and virtuous rewards. Its fruits are eternal and divine.

The heavenly River Ganga removes only sins. Moonlight removes only burning heat and *kalpavriksha* (heavenly tree) removes only poverty but the saints are so great and majestic, having divine powers that they remove all three kinds of torments by their holy company – sins, pains and poverty.

The seat is needed for God to sit

The footprints of all the animals fit well in the footprint of an elephant. Similarly, the devotional services extended to a saint include everything. The *punyas* of all virtuous actions may be attained through devotional service to a true saint. Such service-oriented devotees have nothing more to do for their ultimate benediction. Almighty Shree Hari and his saints are the supreme saviour of the devotees.

It is said, only a bowl of solid gold has the capacity to hold the milk of a lioness. Similarly, God dwells only in the gold-like pure hearts of his devotees. God dwells within the golden hearts of his saints who live happily forever. God dwells in their heart to favour his devotees through his blissful *darshan*. Rainwater settles in shallow pits. If the surface is even and plain, the rainwater will flow away off the even surface, without settling anywhere.

Remember this. Don't beg for worldly things in your prayers to a saint. Don't burden the saints by shifting to them your worldly problems. They are not here to look after your worldly wants. They are here to enlighten us through their holy company. They are here to help us in our devotion and meditation. Don't drag them into the murky puddles of worldly problems and in the mirage of ephemeral gains. Householders should bear this in mind.

(Just as flavour resides in *Shreekhanda* (a sweet dish of curd) and sweet juice resides in sugarcane, similarly Almighty Shree Hari is present in all his devotees.)

How is God present in His devotees? Just as a fragrance pervades in the sandalwood and sweet juice pervades in the sugar cane, in like manner, God pervades in His devotees.

I am not hungry

A devotee from Cambay came to Vadtal with a pot full of *sutarfeni* (a tasty sweet dish). Lord Shreeji Maharaj was gracing a *Sabha* at the bank of Gomti near Vadtal. The *Haribhaktas* arranged a dish to serve to Lord Shree Hari. He carried the pot and *thaal* to serve it to Lord Shree Hari. He prayed, "Maharaj! My Lord! Please receive this *thaal* and favour me." However, Shreeji Maharaj desired to have the *thaal* by the hands of Govardhanbhai.

Govardhanbhai came to the altar and instead of serving *thaal* to Shree Hari, he sat in front of the well served dish and had it himself. He emptied the dish, and belched in satisfaction.

Then he looked at Shree Hari and prayed to Maharaj, "My Lord! Would you like to have some?"

Maharaj said, "As you wish."

Such dialogue continued between them for a long time, but instead of serving sweets to Lord Shree Hari, Govardhanbhai had it all for himself and emptied the pot of *Sutarfeni*. He ate about five kilos of *Sutarfeni*! Meanwhile Mukund Brahmanchari came there to invite Shree Hari for *thaal*, "Maharaj! *Thaal* is ready. Please favour us and have the *thaal*."

Shreeji Maharaj said, "I have had enough Sutarfeni, now I am not hungry, but you may ask Govardhanbhai to have the thaal. He is very hungry!"

The *brahmanchari* was surprised by such unusual observation of Lord Shree Hari. Such statement astonished Saints and devotees too. As was seen by their own eyes, Shree Hari had consumed not even a morsel of thaal but Govardhanbhai consumed the whole pot of *sutarfeni*. They realised that what they saw and what Govardhanbhai did, was nothing less than divine *leela* of Lord Shree Hari. The *brahmanchari* accompanied Govardhanbhai to serve *thaal* meals to him. Govardhanbhai had the *thaal* like a starving man, and took it to his satisfaction and finished the meals served to him in several courses. Devout soul Govardhanbhai had the meal for Lord Shreeji Maharaj. This shows the oneness between a devotee and the almighty. The Lord is absolutely present in his devotee just like the presence of juice in sugar cane and fragrance in a sandalwood tree.

Pada : 8

(Heavy and highly nutritious meals cannot be digested by an ailing man. These are meals fit for healthy people. A healthy man eats the sweet dish of *Sukhadi*, and a patient consumes a light course of vegetable soup or boiled water.)

Highly nutritious meals are not fit for a patient - a sick man. Such meals are harmful to his physical and mental state. Light and lesser caloric meals like vegetable soup and boiled water are more suitable for him. *Satsang samaiyas*, devotional service and religious rituals are like heavy and highly nutritious meals; only true saints and faithful devotees can digest them. Those devotees who are weak in faith or trust will not be able to digest it. Such weak faith is like an ailment - a sickness. Such devotees cannot digest *sukhadi* like *satsang* and religious activities. They do it, but not in the full swing of enthusiasm. Those who do *satsang* and *satsang* activities under social or other pressure are spiritually ill. They are neither healthy nor fit. They are not aware of the onslaught of *Maya*. They drink the soup or water of *Maya* and *Mamta* (ephemeral affection).

A strong and robust physique has nothing to do with it. The soul cannot be strong without *satsang* and devotion. It cannot resist the conspiracy of *Maya* (illusion), without strength and power received from *satsang* and devotion. Such a weak mind cannot be attached firmly in *satsang* and devotion. The fire of desire cannot be extinguished without relating the mind to the blissful from of

God. One cannot attain God without forsaking desires. Only a true devotee enjoys eternally the blissful pleasure of God:

(Act wisely and join *satsang* for eternal gain. Do *Hari Katha* and *Kirtans*; these are the perennial source of eternal pleasure. Be a true servant of God and purify your body, mind and heart. Live in the benign presence of God with your devotional service.)

A bumblebee likes the fragrance of sandalwood and hums happily in the pleasant fragrance of it. A fly dislikes the fragrance of sandalwood. It would not visit a bowl of sandalwood paste. Swami presents his case with an appropriate example supporting his argument. The souls are like flies; they do not sit in *katha-satsang* and religious discourses. They dislike *pooja* and worship. They don't like to attend temple. Where do they sit and what do they do? Such ailing souls sit in the clubs and hotels, and indulge in activities going on in those ghastly places. They relish it. A worm does not like a cart of treacle; it would enjoy happily the dirt and filth. The souls are like such worms; they relish and consume onion, garlic, *biris*, tobacco, wine and alcohol. Don't be filthy souls like them. Be a Garuda (white eagle), flying high in the eternal space.

A goose doesn't like the moonlight, an owl doesn't like the sun, a lily flower doesn't like the water and in like manner, an atheist doesn't like religion and *satsang*. He dislikes *pooja* and religious discourses, hates *kirtans* and *bhajans*. Though he sits idle, he doesn't like to play *raas-kirtans*. He would prefer a bone breaking disco but not a blissful devotional programme.

Listen to this most attentively. Swami is speaking about us. Check it for yourself, whether we are listed amongst the worms or amongst the bumblebees – amongst the sinful or amongst the virtuous? Try your best to place yourself in the list of virtuous souls – the devout souls.

Kadavun - 33

The saints and non-saints stand apart distinctly. Their ways and lifestyles are quite different.

(To ride a lion is subject of great pride and majesty, but it would be at the cost of the rider's life. Similarly, the worldly pleasures, though most alluring, inflict unbearable torment to an enlightened soul)

A person would invite his own death if he were to develop a hobby of riding a lion. He would end his life through an untimely death. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami warns us against the pleasures, of wealth and of sense objects. Don't expand your activities in these risky areas. Most of our householder activities are like shackles and ropes binding us tightly in the prison of *Maya*. Try to relieve and retire yourself from the burden of householder duties and divert that time to service of God – devotion. In service and profession, there is a limiting line when an employee or a professional would be declared unfit, in accordance with his age. In government professions or in public sector occupations, an employee retires at an age of fifty-eight years. He has to leave his job at that age. It is a date of expiry – the end of his service. Unfortunately, we are not fixing any scheduled time or date to end our householder duties. We continue on haplessly till our last breath. Apply now a limiting line and stop your householder duties. Turn to God, devotion and *satsang*. Put in virtuous efforts for the enlightenment of your soul now. Aim for ultimate benediction. God may come at anytime to take us to his divine abode Akshardham. If the soul were stuck at that moment in any sense object or relation, then there would be no possibility of his salvation. Act right now.

I have no chance to live in

There was a businessman, rich and prosperous. He treasured immense wealth in gold, silver and gems and built palace-like-villas at various places to live like a king. He built a new palace to live in the summer days. The palace was cool and comfortable, surrounded by gardens, orchards, artificial streams and artistic fountains.

The palace-like-villa was constructed in pure marble, white like milk and cool like the moonlight. Hundreds of sculptors carved stones to decorate the arches, rooms, doors and gates in fine and flowery designs, statues and other objects of rare art. The merchant too was over enthusiastic in regard to his new villa. He thought day and night and imagined restlessly about his beautiful villa. When he found a visitor or guest, he would happily take him round his beautiful summer palace and show him his sitting rooms, conference room, study and bed rooms to listen to the compliments from him. His mind dwelled constantly in two things: money and assets. He spent generously towards his villas and palaces but was extremely miserly when it came to donating anything to beggars.

The palatial villa was completed on time and scholar priests were called to fix an auspicious time for the housewarming ceremony. Unfortunately, the business tycoon had a heart attack at the time of the *muhurat*. “२०००, २०००, २०००,” The mind determines the destination and as his mind was engaged in his

summer palace, the soul was sent back to the earth to live as a dog. Born as a dog, he sat in front of the main gate, bore heat and cold and waited for an opportunity to enter the villa. As and when he got an opportunity, he ran through the orchard, garden and streams and had leisurely siesta near the fountain and in a rare opportune time, he even entered the rooms to enjoy the pleasures of the palace.

His soul was tied to his summer palace. The merchant's son saw the dog loitering once in the sitting room, spoiling the Persian carpet with its dirt. He got angry with him, took a stick and hit it on his back and chased the barking dog. He threw the dog out of the gate and asked his guards to fix the gate firmly. He warned them about that street dog.

The poor dog cried day and night in the winter cold and looked in grief at the villa. It was his villa but nobody allowed him to enter. He recalled his past birth and remembered his toil for that villa. He was very sorry for his present state. The summer palace was built entirely by his own personal wealth and hard toil but he never got a chance to live there, even for a moment. He found himself in a most pitiable condition. He was very sorry for spoiling his own life. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to forsake all desires before death.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says the following about personal ego and false pride. An egoist lives under the shade of false pride and assigns greater importance to himself.

(The egotistic soul cannot mix with saintly souls. Such efforts would not be successful. The egotistic soul and saint are like oil and water, there will not be oneness between them.)

A true saint cannot live with an egoist. Despite conscious efforts they cannot adjust with each other. A saint corrects the man for his drawbacks whilst an egotistic soul cannot tolerate it. Being egotistic and ego-free are two different poles. They cannot coexist. Water and oil cannot be mixed. Both stay separate from each other. Though living together physically, they live separately. Why is it so? Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami explains.

Kadavun - 34

(A worldly soul desires ephemeral pleasures and a saint dislikes them. A saint yearns for tasteless meals and a worldly soul desires tasty meals. A saint puts on old and torn attires to cover his person but a

worldly soul desires new and precious attires. A saint is clean and pure at heart but a worldly soul dwells in a dirty mind. A worldly soul desires sense objects, but a saint rejects it out-rightly. A worldly soul desires and longs for worldly greatness whilst a saint ignores it completely.)

Their ways are different. Their choices and lifestyles are in extreme contrast. An enlightened saint discards ephemeral pleasures of the sense objects.

(It is most difficult for devotees and non-devotees to live together. Sadguru Nikulanand Swami says that it is very difficult to narrate, but there are lots of pains and torments in the life of a non-devotee.)

Those who live humbly in the benign state of freedom from ego and those who live in ego cannot live together. The devout soul lives as per the orders of his God and a non-devotee acts as per his mind. Their philosophies upon life stand quite different from each other. An egotistic soul thinks constantly about his pleasures and talks about them. The saints cannot educate such a soul. The saints cannot preach anything to him. To gain his bodily wants, he grows wings to fly to them and acts very swiftly and dexterously to attain them but in the tasks related to the soul and his benediction, he acts slow like those who are impaired.

Kadavun - 35

(They abscond from the sweet treacle to eat oily cakes. They leave the wholesome butter oil to have harmful oil, and the oil too is extracted from the seeds of *kanaji* (a wild oil seed with unpleasant odour.)

Who likes to consume an oil cake instead of delicious treacle? Who likes to drink stinking oil instead of fragrant butter oil? Who likes to have onion instead of *doodhpaak* (a sweet dish of milk)? Similarly, who would like to dive in dirty water instead of nectar? Only a fool would go for such undesirable things.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that a dumb-headed man does not like to receive benedictory preachings. Perhaps, he may find it harmful for his self! Only those who are wise take such advice, not those who have no judgement of truth and lies.

A *Purani* was reading scripture at a village *satsang* programme. He narrated the story of Mahabharata and in the story of Draupadiji, he described that, though married to five men, Draupadiji was a *Sati* (chaste woman) and was most faithful to her husbands. A daughter-in-law was listening to this episode with her mother-in-law. She gathered and grasped that Draupadi was married to five husbands, whilst she is respected as a *Sati* (chaste woman). She thought to enjoy her life by marrying five times and with such pleasure hold the respectable seat of a *Sati*. They came back home after the *Katha*. Her mother-in-law said, "My daughter! Have you grasped well the essence of the preachings?"

"Yes, my mother! I have understood it well," said the obedient daughter-in-law.

The mother-in-law then asked, "What have you grasped from it?"

"Mother! We may earn respect befitting a *Sati*, if we marry five times like Draupadiji," she said honestly in her reply.

But her mother-in-law too was equally a fool. To support and re-strengthen her comprehension she said in enthusiasm, "She became a *Sati* by marrying five husbands, but one may become greater than her if married to more than five!" In this way an enlightened soul may learn negative points from such preachings.

Kadavun - 36

(If a male dancer posed as a woman and married a man, he would not become a housewife, because he is a man in reality.)

A group of stage performers came to a village to present a drama. A man in the role of a woman wore a dress of a woman and bedecked himself with the ornaments suitable for a graceful lady. He displayed on stage his charms as a woman. A man from the audience took him as a real woman and desired to marry him. He fell in love with her and eloped on a horse with her. The actor was a bit confused by such sudden development. They came to the home of the horse rider. The horse rider found himself the happiest in the world. But as he looked and observed the face of that 'woman', he realised that she was in fact a man disguised in the dress of a woman. He pulled him by his hand and sent him back to the camp.

This is a metaphor, presented by Swami to explain human life and living beings. The souls on the earth perform their role in disguise of males and females. All living beings are pure consciousness neither male nor female. The One and only, Lord Purushottamnarayan is male (man) and all others are women. Sadguru Brahmanand Swami sings:

(Being a woman, how could I marry a woman like me? I have surrendered to the strongest one. I am mad after Him.)

The souls are not bound to caste or sub-caste. The souls are pure consciousness, seen and perceived in the guise of man, woman, animal or bird. The souls (as consciousness) live forever and are immortal. The ropes of Maya would not bind one who knows this eternal truth.

Great ascetic Shukdeva and great saint Narada were rock firm celibates. Both were enlightened souls. Both were great in devotion. The royal court of King Janak had a debate in regard to both saints. Who amongst them was the greatest? It was very difficult to prove it by argument and debate. Finally they decided to test both the saints to conclude their argument.

Queen Sunayana invited them to her palace. Rishi Shukdeva and Saint Narada graced the royal palace. Her maidservants received them with due decorum and offered suitable seat on the royal swing. They graced the swing. Queen Sunayana came there to welcome the guests. She saluted them and sat between both of them. Saint Narada found himself a bit uncomfortable and thought that his celibacy and penance would be at stake due to such close proximity of a woman. He feared that such association might pollute his mind and thought. He, therefore, withdrew to distance himself from her. Shukdeva was on other side of her. He sat there as he was, without taking note of her proximity. Shukdeva found no difference in her. He saw her and others as pure souls, equal and uniform, without any recognition of their gender! Queen Sunayana took a mental note of this, and concluded that Shukdeva was the greatest amongst the Yogis. He lives at the sublime spiritual plane by seeing living beings as souls, pure consciousness.

In his Bhagwat discourses, Dongareji Maharaj says, "God shall not be attained, unless we erase the knowledge that differentiates men and women. Erosion of such knowledge stabilises devotion and non-attachment."

(To speak more is dangerous. Speak tactfully. Get it done gradually. Don't speak more or forcefully. A scared goat speaks in fear in front of a lion. Similarly, one should not speak to the unintelligent at an inappropriate time).

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to speak little, even in the matter of benediction and ultimate good. Why does he ask us to do so? Because an unintelligent man may not like to receive such advice in a positive manner.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says: “*ItÍwk fnu,t òu¾tu W...su*” Shreeji Maharaj has said in Vachanamrit: “I know very well how the soul should be consigned to the divine abode. Now I will not say any more, if spoken any further, it would be more than enough or in excess.”

Swami warns us to speak less and wisely. Swami elaborately narrates an example of the lion and a goat. A goat speaks little and speaks in fear in front of a lion. Just like that lion, a dim man may lose his temper at any moment. He himself would be at a loss if taken otherwise.

Two brothers in Kutch were *Satsangis* of Shree Hari. Khetabhai and Bhimjibhai were firm followers of Shree Hari. Shree Hari loved them because of their devotion and faith. The brothers were equally good to the saints and ascetics visiting the village. They served them by providing food and shelter and enjoyed *katha-satsang*. Once their mother fell ill and was bed ridden due to some unidentified ailment. They served her to their best ability by proper medical treatment, ailment and personal service. Amidst the chants of Shree Hari’s blissful name, Khetabhai looked at his brother and asked him to invite Shreeji Maharaj to grace the house.

Bhimji Bhagat came to Shreeji Maharaj and prayed, “Maharaj! Please grace our dwelling. My mother is in a critical condition. Please come and bless us in our adverse time.”

Shreeji Maharaj joined him instantly and walked to the house of the devotee. At a street corner, a woman of the *Ghanchi* community met them. She looked at Shreeji Maharaj and said, “Please return! Bhimji’s mother is no more. What would you do now? Are you able to revive her by invoking vital air?”

Shreeji Maharaj looked at her in compassion and said, “If I decided not to do so, would you be able to do it?” Shreeji Maharaj retorted firmly. She was taken aback by such firmness.

Shreeji Maharaj graced the house of Bhimji and looked at the corpse of their mother. He looked at her and pronounced, “The children are still young. They need their mother and motherly care. Please get up for your children!”

The body in dormant state returned to conscious state and in no time she got up from the slumber of death to be with her family. Shreeji Maharaj said, “Install my divine image in your heart, do devotion and help others to do devotion.”

Shreeji Maharaj returned to his saintly abode. That woman of Ghanchi community came to know about Bhimji’s mother and realised the divine powers of Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan. She was brought back to living state by the divine powers of Shreeji Maharaj. The Ghanchi woman was an eyewitness to the death and also to the new life of that lady. God re-invoked life into a dead body.

Lord Shreeji Maharaj is God Himself. She surrendered herself in devotion and meditation of Shreeji Maharaj and spent the rest of her life in devotion of Lord Shree Hari. Bhima's mother lived for ten years to take good care of her sons. Then, Shreeji Maharaj himself escorted her to the divine abode of Akshardham.

(The lid of the basket that contained a cobra should be fixed firmly. If opened, even in innocence, it would result in pain and torment.)

Don't open the basket that houses a venomous snake. The snake will not appreciate your action that grants him freedom, but it will bite back instantly for touching its lid! Don't associate yourself with such venomous people. Stay away from them. Don't trust them. Revenge is their inherent nature.

I am not demanding money for free

Single-minded devotee Natha Bhagat was a resident of Vadodara. He was rich spiritually, but was poor economically. At times, he and his family (including children) lived without food. Devout soul Natha Bhagat felt very sorry for his starving children. He found no way to feed his children. His worldly-wise wife suggested to him to sell their milking buffalo. The money received would be enough to banish the starvation of their children. Kind-hearted husband Natha Bhagat liked the idea and sold the buffalo to the *Diwan* of Vadodara state.

Natha Bhagat went to the house of the Diwan and sold his milking buffalo to the Diwan. The Diwan promised to pay him the amount within ten days and took the buffalo. Weeks and fortnights passed but the family spent such time in unbearable starvation receiving no money from the Diwan. Natha Bhagat was a bit hesitant to remind him about the payment. Bhagat respected the Diwan as an important person. He was the administrative head of the state. He thought, "How could a small man like me dare to remind him?" But on the other side, it was most unbearable for him to see and witness the torments of his starving children. At last he pulled himself together and approached the Diwan at the steps of the temple once.

The Diwan was walking toward the inner temple. Natha Bhagat stood at his side with folded hands and requested very politely. To do darshan of God at the temple was his daily routine at the beginning of the day and this was obstructed by the presence of Natha Bhagat. He looked angrily at him, Natha Bhagat said, "Sir! My children are starving since days. If you pay me the money of the buffalo I sold to you, we shall be able to buy some food grains to feed our hungry children. Please! Do some thing." Bhagat was drawn by fatherly sentiments for his children and in excess of emotion he could not speak further.

Instead of feeling sorry for his carelessness, Diwan scolded him in anger and hate, "You insolent beggar! Do you know, to whom are you asking for money?"

Natha Bhagat said, "Sir! I am not asking it for free. It is not a begging. I have sold to you my buffalo. I request money in return for the sale."

The Diwan was proud of his political power. Under intoxication of power and wealth he said, "I will teach you a lesson for your misbehaviour of demanding money." He removed a shoe from his foot, and raised the shoe to hit Bhagatji. Bhagat wept pitiably by such rash and rude behaviour of the Diwan.

Sadguru Brahmanand Swami was sat at the *Sabha Mandapam* opposite the steps. He was looking at Natha Bhagat. He challenged the Diwan for such rude behaviour, "Diwan! Stop this nonsense. You will be destroyed, if that shoe touches my fellow *Satsangi* - Natha Bhagat. You shall be reduced to soil and dust. Narupant Diwan! You are not hitting at Natha Bhagat, but at Almighty Swaminarayan Bhagwan. Ego and pride of power will destroy you. God will not spare you."

Narupant Diwan wore his shoe in fear of the thundering challenge of Brahmanand Swami. But such bad deed had been done and the act he originally thought of doing brought devastating counter effects on Narupant Diwan. The King suspended him for his conduct and dismissed him from the state service. He was banished from the kingdom. He left the state empty handed and spent the rest of his life loitering on the streets and begging for bread.

God is the saviour of poor and tormented souls. God displeases to those who are not kind to the poor. If possible and within your means, do well for others. Don't invite the displeasure of the poor.

Pada : 9

(None else but a saint holds the full capacity to tell the truth of eternal happiness. Saints are pure, merciful and open hearted. Saints are like a mother who administers bitter medicine for the health of her child.)

Saint are the real relatives of a soul

Saints have the capacity to convey the truth. Saints are kind and merciful. They're an ocean of selfless love. The saints are like a mother who gives bitter medicine to save the life of her dear child. The saints tell us the bitter truth to save the poor soul from the torments of births and deaths. They correct our

wrongs by warning us of our misbehaviour and follies. Lord Shreeji Maharaj says in Vachanamrits: 'Live in the holy company of that saint who stops you in your wrongs and live not in the company of a saint who merely shows love and affection but is not ready to forewarn you for your improper acts.' Progressive reform is not possible by such a saint who is not ready to stop his followers on their path of sin. The saints opposing sins are the true saints. Those saints are great who lead their followers from the darkness of ignorance to the enlightenment of consciousness. They relieve the mind from the pleasure of the sense objects and help the soul to live in the benign presence of Lord Shree Krishna.

(Saints are like wasps that sting a worm to change its body. Saints preach bitter truths to bring out their own true colour.)

A wasp stings repeatedly to scare the worm and compels it to remember constantly the shapely wings and smart body of a wasp. Such concentration transforms the crawling worm into a winged wasp ready to fly high and sting others for their self-protection. A soul imprisoned by his baser instincts, will be relieved from the shackles of the sense objects, if he bore the sting of the bitter truth conveyed by a saint. The soul will have to bear the bitterness, insults and other such stings to attain ultimate benediction. The soul will be consigned to eternal emancipation on its wings of devotion and worship.

(Saints are the true friends of mankind. The soul should realise this truth. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says: "Saints are the perennial source of amnesty and emancipation.")

Kadavun - 37

Saints are the true friends of a soul. A needy soul sails through the ocean of worldly life through holy-company of a saint. A soul becomes free of fear of the torments of birth and death. Who lives for others? Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami lists here the names:

(Trees, roads earth, clouds, wind, moon and the sun live for the good of others.)

A poet has described such selfless objects:

(Trees do not eat their own fruits and ponds do not drink their own water. Their life and services are for others.)

Trees oblige others by giving them cool shade and sweet fruits and by bearing heat. Their leaves, branches and roots are used in medicine and wood is used in furniture and houses. Not only that, but funeral rites are not complete without the firewood needed for a pyre. The earth too is equally obliging:

(The earth obliges others by giving them her sweet food grains. The earth does not eat the food grains; it obliges others by feeding them.)

Mother earth is the perennial source of many products. The earth produces food grains, trees, plants, metal, stones and other elements. The earth does not consume any of these products. It is produced for others. Manure and water given to the earth are same in taste, but the farm products gifted by the earth are unique and different in their taste. Chillies are hot, lemons are sour, sugar cane is sweet, *karelas* are bitter! Flowers are with distinct fragrance and colours! These tastes, flavours and fragrances are an everlasting treasure of mother earth! Huts, houses and palaces are also built on the earth. Thus, mother earth sustains the living world.

Clouds provide rain–water. Water is life. Water and air sustain the living world. Life cannot survive without water or air. The saints are like these perennial sources, living for the welfare of others. They oblige us. They favour us:

(Poet Kaag says: I have seen the saints carrying belongings on their shoulder. They oblige us by giving celestial pleasure to mankind.)

What does 'obligation' mean? To remove the pains of others, to remove the fears of a scared soul, to shelter a needy soul, to donate to a needy person, to help the others are called obliging acts – selfless favours.

The saints bless the sinful souls by preaching to them virtue and devotion. They wash off the sins of a fallen soul and transform him into a virtuous and God-fearing soul. Saints are the shrine of shrines. Pilgrimage of a shrine, destroys the sins of a soul, but the saints remove the sins of the soul by their *darshan*. God, Acharyas and saints are very near to us. It is up to us, whether we should ascend or descend.

A lifetime opportunity

(True saints redeem many souls. Here is the most sought after opportunity to live in holy fellowship of such true saints.)

Saints are a fountain of divine pleasure. Holy-company of a true saint, relieves the soul from the prison of *Maya*. Saints are like a touchstone transforming iron into pure gold. Violent Valio became Rishi Valmiki through holy company of Mahamuni Narada. The saint is a lighthouse stood steadfast in the risky ocean of worldly life. They are there to guide and alert us in our journey through life. They are the true relatives of the solitary soul. They are the true guides on the heavenly path of salvation. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says: 'Believe in me, if it is possible for you. This is the rarest opportunity in your life, come forward and relish it.' Sadguru Brahmanand Swami sings:

(This is most auspicious time. Wed Lord Shree Krishna with your heart and soul. Don't waste your precious life in unsolicited company. Think deep in your heart. Discard ephemeral pleasures of the sense objects. Do devotion of Lord Natvar, to relieve yourself from the torments of life and death. There is nothing to worry about in the benign fold of Lord Shree Krishna.)

An enlightened soul lives in holy company. He lives like a lotus in a pond. Though a householder, he is detached from the householder's world. As we know, gold is a rust-free metal. In the proximity of God, the soul becomes pure like solid gold, luminous and precious. His mind in eternity concentrates in the divine image of God. God dwells forever in the seat of his heart. Such a soul dwells absolutely in the divine image of God. The rust of *Maya* cannot stain him. His life would be fully satiated and pains would be banished forever.

Kadavun- 38

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami sings the glory and majesty of true saints. Saints are holy by the divine presence of God, by their service to God. They have heard with their ears the blessed words of God. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says: "I have touched personally the visible form of God. I have embraced my Lord with love and affection. I have served sandalwood paste to my Lord with my own hands. I have bedecked him personally with flower garlands. I have obeyed each of his orders. I have served meals to my Lord with my own hands. I have helped my Lord to have water. I have touched his divine person by serving him personally."

The bodies of saints have become holy through their service of God. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to live with love in the holy-company of such saints. Listen to them attentively and follow their teachings:

(There is no equivalent to that of saints who have served Shree Hari personally. Those saints are here with you in the world. Grab this lifetime opportunity and live in their holy-company. Don't miss the chance to fulfil your goal of life.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami clarifies: The devotees like Dada Khachar, the saints like Gopalanand Swami and Muktanand Swami and Acharyas like Ayodhyaprasadji and Raghuvirji would be very difficult to serve. It is possible to serve others, but not any like those who have served personally Lord Shree Hari. Those released souls have relieved many souls from the burden of sin.

Saints Wield divine Powers

Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami lived most at Junagadh. The Satsang of Junagadh area had benefited most through the holy-company of Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami. Swami's devotional power led the Satsang very well and aspirants surrendered to Lord Shreeji Maharaj. Not only the Hindus, but the Muslims too respected him highly. The kings, princely statesmen, businessmen, traders and professionals from distant regions were drawn here for his holy company. The inner devotional force and power of his penance prevailed upon the heart and soul of his disciple householders. They were coloured in the colour of devotion.

Gunatitanand Swami graced once the village of Kaalsari to favour local Satsang. Disciple saints accompanied him. Dungarji Bhagat and Satsangis at the village prayed to Swami, "Swami! Please remain with us for some more days. Local Satsang shall be benefited spiritually by your devotional discourses. Please grant our humble prayer." Swami consented to their prayer.

They bathed next day at the river, early in the morning and graced the farm of the temple. Saints and devotees accompanied him. Dungarji Bhagat served *Ponk* of *Bajara* (roasted raw fresh crop). Gunatitanand Swami served the *thaal* to Shree Hari and distributed the *prasadi* to the saints and devotees. Dungarji Bhagat said then to Swami, "Swami! This farm belongs to the temple. Satsangi Govind Bhagat serves at the farm and takes good care of the farm produce. This is his devotional service to Lord Shree Hari. Devotee Govind Bhagat has no children. They are a lonely couple. Please be kind to them and bless them with progeny."

Swami said in sheer compassion, "Please bring me some water."

Dungarji Bhagat brought a traditional jug of water. Swami took some water on his palm and came to the huge tree of *Timbarva*. He poured it ritually on the robust stem of the tree and initiated *vartman* (sacred resolute):

Swami then turned to Dungarji Bhagat and said, "Bhagat! The soul of this tree will come as the son of Govindram. The timber of this tree may be taken to the temple by cutting it into shapely planks. Construct a beautiful temple from this timber. Use this sacred wood only in our temple." Swami then graced a satsang session and went back to Junagadh.

As was promised by Swami, a male child was born to the wife of Govindji, after a period of nine months. Govindram was very happy with the birth of a son. He shared his pleasure with all the villagers and distributed sweets. The child was named Bhimji.

The child was educated well by his parents right from his birth. Child Bhimji imbibed many virtues and his father Govindram taught him ethical duties by narrating episodes from the scriptures of the Sampradaya. Govindram said to him, "My Son! You were a tree in your past birth. Gunatitanand Swami had transformed you into an ideal human being. Live in holy-company of saints and do devotion of God. Serve God and his saints. We are deeply indebted to the saints. They have obliged us in numerous ways. Be thankful to them. Live like a humble servant of theirs." As and when they sat together for a satsang, Govindram got his message reinforced to transform the virtues into the inherent attributes.

Bhimji did daily *darshan* of Shreeji Maharaj. He stood on one foot and did *Japa* on the rosary beads. In such meditative mood he pondered daily, "O Soul! You were in the dormant state of a tree. A merciful saint had transformed you into a man – wise and enlightened. Now, don't forget God in the allurements of worldly pleasures, otherwise the soul will be agonised and tormented by further births and deaths. Therefore try to earn the *punyas* with your virtuous deeds in this life. O Solitary traveller you have come here alone and will have to travel back in solitude to attain your ultimate destination. Nothing is to accompany you."

(The soul has to leave the world without any company. *Punyas* and *Paaps* earned by him, will shadow the solitary soul. Get ready the everlasting tiffin of devotion to sustain you in this solitary journey. There shall be no shops on your lonesome path to procure sustenance for your soul. Serve a

saint with selfless love to cross the ocean of worldly life. Lord Shree Hari is the Lord and master of Dayanand. Lord Shree Hari redeems and emancipates the soul.)

Kadavun - 39

Born to the lowest caste of Koli, Bhimji Bhagat was a pious Satsangi. He followed and practised tenets of this sect. He was a true and faithful Satsangi. God and great saints are capable of transforming a tree into a human being, just as touchstone transforms iron into sterling Gold. Similarly, the holy touch of Shree Hari transforms the soul into pure consciousness. A vagabond becomes a virtuous devotee.

(Holy company of saint improves our life and opens new vistas of perception. It removes pollution and dirt of the mind. The mind dwells in the eternal charms of Lord Shree Hari.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, "Holy Company of a saint relieves the soul from the bondage of matter. It washes off the dirt of the mind. The mind and soul colour themselves in the devotional colour of Lord Shree Hari. True saints open our inner eyes – perception of the real self. Holy company of a saint removes the bad odour of the gross matter.

Don't look upon a saint as having human attributes.

(Other trees improve upon their elemental attributes in the fragrant company of sandalwood trees. Similarly, a saint receives the redemptive attributes through holy company of Lord Shree Hari.)

There may be many trees – wild and rough, spread everywhere in the forest, but a few sandalwood trees among them, spread pleasing fragrance throughout the entire forest. Similarly, a saint in society spreads the fragrance of his devotion, devotional ways, knowledge and detachment.

The stream of a village becomes sacred water when merged into the holy river of Ganga. The saints who are like stream water, become holy like the River Ganga through holy company of Lord Shree Hari. Infamous robber Valio, became Rishi Valmiki through holy company of a saint. Infamous robber Joban Pagi became pure and holy through the holy touch of Lord Shree Hari.

Holy company of a saint purifies the soul and a purified soul attains sacred proximity of Lord Shree Hari. The saints open the gates of heaven for the redeemed soul. One cannot receive spiritual wisdom without holy company of a saint. A true saint frees the soul.

(There are many mendicants and ascetics in the world, but they stand nowhere in comparison to a true saint. Just like a swan and a crane cannot be treated equally).

A swan and a crane look alike in their external appearance. Both are white and impressive dwelling near the water, but a swan eats real pearls and a crane sustains his life by eating fish. Lord Shreeji Maharaj has said repeatedly in his Vachanmrits: 'O *Paramhansas!* Please come forward to me, I desire to have an important dialogue with you.' Lord Swaminarayan compares them with the *Paramhansa* or royal swan. A royal swan consumes only milk from the mixture of water and milk. The saints are like those swans. They drink the milk of devotion – devotion of God. They reject the water-like mirage – of the worldly pleasures and the gross matter. They dwell at the bank of Mansarovar. The saints resemble a swan, they dwell in *satsang* like a Swan, dwelling at the bank of Mansarovar. Be wise and live in holy company of saints. Those who are selfish like a crane, those who are sinful and those who are short tempered or shameless, are not able to swim across the sea of life. They and others attached to them, sink deep in the waters of the world. A stone tied to a stone, cannot float on water. They sink together.

Swami says that the saint swims for himself and helps others also to swim in the waters of worldly life. They themselves practise ethical duties and encourage others to also practise it. They are the pure saints of Shree Hari. One who enlightens an ignorant soul and brings him back into the luminosity of knowledge is a true saint. The word 'Sant' itself is great and majestic. Only most fortunate souls live in the holy company of a saint – a true saint.

A true saint has with him, that which others don't have

(The son of an emperor cannot be treated as a poor mendicant. As Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami has said, such a child is not anything less than a king in terms of his power and wealth.)

The son of an emperor, though not a king, holds inherent majesty as son of the king – the prince. The saints are not God, but are the worthy sons of God. The son of a king cannot be termed as poor or needy. Similarly, saints are not

poor, because God is with them. They possess virtuous wealth of devotion, knowledge, asceticism, compassion, satisfaction, mercy and kindness. Others do not have this.

Someone may be great like a lord or a minister possessing palace, cars, assets, estates, wealth, respect and family, but the wealth and all the belongings are ephemeral and mortal. Their wealth is not divine; it is gross matter, subject to mortality – a final end. Saints have with them the supreme Lord – Lord of universe and cosmoses. Worldly souls may not be able to realise the greatness and wealth of saints, as they see the saints living in solitude without any relative or well-wishers and appearance wise, they look poor like a beggar. But the wealth possessed by a saint is divine and majestic.

Kadavun - 40

The worldly pleasures are repulsive to a true saint. To whom should a saint be compared? They are deep and poised like an ocean. The heat of the sun's rays do not boil a sea. Heavy rains do not increase its water and prolonged drought does not reduce it. Its waters are unfathomable unlike rivers, lakes or ponds, which cannot be compared with the sea. Rivers, ponds and lakes dry in want of rainwater, but an ocean roars through all the seasons with pride.

(True saints are graceful, matured and well balanced in their response. They can resist with solace the torments of all kinds. They are the true well-wishers of living beings. They remove the pains of others.)

Solace is the cardinal attribute of a true saint. They speak little. Brevity is an ornament of their speech. They speak for the good of others. They never speak ill of others. They never fight or quarrel. They dislike fame and leadership. They do not display pride when praised with admiration nor lament when given bitter criticism. They are concentrated in devotion of God. Though the most virtuous of every walk of life, they prefer to maintain a low profile by not displaying their virtuous attributes. Wealth or sense objects do not tempt them. They are equipoised and detached from the world.

Just as a boat is required to cross the sea, a saint is necessary to cross the sea of worldly life. Just as a philosopher's stone fulfils the wishes of man, a saint and his holy company fulfils the wishes of an aspirant. We are sitting here under the cool shade of *satsang*. What we desire here in *satsang* will be attained by us through the grace of God. We can improve our life and birth through our selfless love for the saints:

(Everything settles to a normal course through our unselfish love towards saints and life in this way shall be perfect with success everywhere.)

Our selfless love to a saint, improves our present life and our next birth. It changes our lifestyle. Not only human beings, but also lower species like snakes and others can improve their life by the grace of a true saint. Here is a true story:

The Saint is the vital air of the world

In his earlier life, Sadguru Gopalanand Swami was known as Khushal Bhatt. Once, a small child at Todla was playing beneath a *Pippul* tree. All of a sudden, a black cobra came out from a burrow in the stem of the Pippul tree and in venomous anger he bit the child. The poison of the snakebite spread through the whole body and the child fell unconscious on the ground. The parents rushed to the child and saw their darling son fallen on the earth like a dead log. They lamented for the pitiable state of their child and approached Khushal Bhatt to save their child. They said to Bhattji, "Khushalbai! Some evil spirit possesses our child. Please be kind and help us. Please protect our son."

Khushalbai came to the tree to see the child. He sprinkled some water on his person. Holy water burnt his sins. Seeing the snake, he asked it, "Why have you bitten this child?"

The snake gained speech like that of a human being by the mercy of the saint, "The child had stepped on my tail and I had bitten him for this."

Think about the divine powers of a true saint. Plain water touched by him, holds the power to destroy the sins of others. The service submitted to a saint heartily and with devotional love earns *punya* for a devotee. A saint is the vital breath of the cosmos.

The snake then said, "In my earlier birth, I was a *Varnasankara*. My mother belonged to the *Bania* community and my father was a Muslim. I committed many sins to gain wealth. I was angry and short tempered under the burden of my sins. Even in my last breath I was angry and therefore in the present birth I am born as a snake. I have only just realised my past birth through your divine powers."

"O Swamiji! I surrender to you. Please receive me at your blessed feet. Please be kind to me and relieve me from this birth as a snake. I am very unhappy as a snake."

Khushalbai placed his hand on the head of the child and removed the poison. Khushalbai said to the snake, "Now don't bite anybody and live life here near the stem of this tree. This boy will come daily to give you sacred water

and *prasadi* of God. Eat and drink those things and live without anger or revenge. Do *japa* of the *Mahamantra*: 'Swaminarayan.' Don't bite anybody!

His inherent nature was changed by the *prasadi* he received from the saint and in the years passed the snake lived happily with the children without harming them. The children of the village played with him by pulling his tail and touching his majestic hood, but instead of frowning, he danced and played with the children!

Pada : 10

The powers of devotion and a true saint are most amazing. The snake was reborn to the *charan* community (community of bards) by the grace of Khushal Bhatt. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami sings:

(Ones efforts shall be successful and the path will end with the ultimate destination through service to a saint. A true saint takes us to the divine abode of God.)

(True saints are unique. Nothing can be compared with a true saint. I have applied my wisdom and had thought extensively upon this. Nothing on the earth, heaven or the lower *lokas*, match the cardinal virtues of a true saint. Whatever that is heard or seen are not perfect like that of a true saint. Saints are pure and precious.)

The gross matter on the earth and the *lokas* are not perfect like a true saint. A true saint cannot be compared with them.

(The saints are eminent and God is supreme. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that a pair like them cannot be seen anywhere.)

God and a saint form a unique pair. All the religions and all the scriptures have admired the glory and majesty of God and the saints of God. God dwells in his saints and a saint dwells in God. Thus the two of them are merged in each other. Shreeji Maharaj says in *Vachanamrits*: One earns the fruits of serving God through his service to saints of God. A true saint cannot live without God; similarly, God cannot bear separation from his saints.

Kadavun - 41

(He is matchless. Nothing on the earth matches his divine majesty. Many have searched thoroughly for Him through a deep search within the gross body. He Himself is the incarnator of all the incarnations on the earth, and He himself has come on the earth with all his divine majesty).

Everything is dull and dry without the majesty of God. God has emancipated mankind by incarnating himself after Brahma attained fifty years of age. God has shown the path of salvation without any discrimination amongst birds, animals, human beings, ghosts, spirits and the objects in dormant state. God has emancipated them without looking at their acts or deeds. God has blessed them with eternal peace and bliss of the divine abode.

The Gate is Wonderful

Shree Hari constructed the temple of Lord Gopinathji at Gadhpur. A shepherd from Aatkot came to Gadhpur for some personal work and went to the temple to do *darshan* of Lord Gopinathji. He was very pleased to have *darshan* of God. He liked the temple and particularly the main gate. The gate was majestic and splendid. It was carved intricately in pure solid wood. It was a beautiful work of art. The gate was fixed permanently in the mind and memory of that shepherd. He would see it visibly real in front of him whenever he thought of the gate. He remembered it repeatedly and constantly in all his works and engagements and remembered it automatically without any reference to it. If he met anybody, he would say to them, "Have you visited Gadhpur? You better go to see the gate of the temple. It is wonderful. It adorns beautiful carvings. It is unforgettable."

He would admire the gate most often either to others or to himself. He wouldn't ever forget the gate. His life ended at an appropriate time and God came to him to escort him to Akshardhaam. The shepherd was surprised by the presence of God. He prayed, "O Lord! I have not done any devotion, meditation or *Japa*. I have not performed religious duties. I have not earned any *punyas* through my acts. I'm surprised you have come here to escort me?"

Shreeji Maharaj said, "It is no a problem in that you have not done any devotion, penance or *Japa*. I am here to consign you to my abode of Akshardham, because of your constant and repeated praise of the gate of my temple. You have not forgotten it in the whole of your life. Also you have inspired others to do *darshan* of it as well. This is your devotion and dedication." This shows the compassion and selfless love of Shree Hari. God's acts are divine:

(Emancipation of holy aspirants cannot be a surprise but it would be a wonder and most praiseworthy if demonic and lowly souls are emancipated. Words have no capacity to narrate the greatness and majesty of our contemporary God. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks the aspirants to ponder and penetrate this in his innermost.)

What kinds of souls did Lord Shreeji Maharaj emancipate? Shree Hari emancipated even those who were not religious and did no devotion. Shree Hari emancipated the demonic souls and the lowest of the low. He emancipated sinners and merciless people by changing their lives.

Lord Shreeji Maharaj has said to his saints at Gadhada, "O saints! How would our Satsang grow, if we sat steadfast at this place? Therefore move constantly from village to village, from town to town and region to region, contact aspirants and do one-to-one *satsang* with them to show them the path of ultimate salvation."

They prayed in submission, "O Maharaj! The villagers are illiterate and ignorant. They are wild and unrefined. Their means are sinful and livelihood earned by such means has made them inert and senseless like a stone. It would be very difficult to bring them back to the path of religion and ethical duties. Kindly enlighten us and show us the means to educate them."

Shreeji Maharaj said to them, "O saints! Stop worrying!" Shreeji Maharaj then took out a flower garland from his neck and said to them, "Take this *prasadi* garland with you. Whoever looks at the *prasadi* garland will be coloured in the bright colour of devotion." They received the flower garland with due submission and visited villages and towns to do *satsang*. As soon as they entered a village, they formed a group amongst themselves and sat upright in the meditative mood of worship and devotion. They did *dhoon* and sang devotional praises of God:

(Death is imminent and the journey is solitary.
The soul has to leave the house, palace and wealth
and his corpse has to be laid on the earth.)

God speaks through his saints. God receives meals and pleases to his devotees by dwelling in his saints. They finished the devotional singing and opened their eyes from their meditative state. The saints saw many villagers sitting in front of them listening to devotional music. The saints were very happy to see the villagers at the *satsang programme*. They helped the villagers to

do *darshan* of the *prasadi* flower-garland of Shree Hari. The villagers slipped instantly into meditational trance when they did darshan of the prasadi garland and had darshan of the divine abode of Lord Shreeji Maharaj. These enlightened souls realised the ultimate aim of human life and turned to the fold of satsang. They forsook the sinful means of livelihood and submitted themselves at the lotus feet of the saints. In waking state they prayed to the saints, "O saints! Please initiate *Panchvartamans*, *Kanthis* and *Mantra Deeksha* and admit us into the Satsang of Lord Shreeji Maharaj. Teach and preach to us the ways to live a sin-free life of a true satsangi. Please lead us onto the path of devotion and divine pleasure.

Thus the prasadi flower-garland of Lord Shree Hari had emancipated innumerable souls and in present time it redeems us to dwell in the blissful abode of Akshardham. Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan gives us divine pleasure and destroys the illusive pleasures of matter.

Kadavun - 42

(Mankind is amazed by the divine pleasures witnessed by them. Lord Shree Hari has shown many the blissful image and divine vision of the abode of the Supreme Lord.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says: The divine *leelas* performed by Lord Shree Hari in his contemporary incarnation are most amazing. As and when they wished, the wishes of his devotees were granted by Shree Hari. Devout soul Parvatbhai thought in his mind about the incarnation of Lord Nrushimha, and wished to do *darshan* of God in his incarnation as a lion-man. Lord Shreeji Maharaj blessed him with blissful *darshan* of all twenty-four incarnations of the Supreme Lord. One after another, all these incarnations appeared before Parvatbhai and merged thereafter in the form of Lord Shreeji Maharaj dwelling in front of him.

Lord Shreeji Maharaj camped for six months at Meghpur and offered daily the *choryasi* feast-meals to Brahmins. Many of his faithful devotees were able to do *darshan* of Akshardham in such Samadhi state whilst *yogis* had to spend their whole life to master the state of meditational trance, by sitting still for years. There were occasions when termites established their colonies and formed nests on the body of *Rishis* sat in meditational trance, but such penance and meditation did not transform into *darshan* of the divine abode or God. Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan blessed the souls and put them into instant

meditational trance to realise God. All attained Samadhi with the grace of Shreeji Maharaj, whether they deserved it or not.

(The aspirants were stacked in a room like tall stacks of bags and were sent into the state of instant meditational trance. They spent days, weeks and months in such state of meditational trance.)

They returned to waking state after the days and months in meditational trance. As and when Shree Hari called them, they would awaken from Samadhi state, and rise from the stacks to join Lord Shree Hari. When they saluted Shree Hari, they were asked, "What did you see there?"

Aspirants would submit:

(We saw *Svetadweep* and did *darshan* of Vasudeva. We saw their innumerable *Muktas* (released souls of Akshardham). The divine abodes emitted luminosity like a limitless ocean. There were springs of nectar, and the *Muktas* of Akshardham walked there leisurely. There was no heat or cold. It was most peaceful, pleasurable and tranquil.)

What a miracle? Shatanand Swami dived in the deep waters of Hamirsar (a lake by that name near Bhuj-Kutch) and when returning to the surface arrived instead at Badrikashram (a place by that name in the mountain range of the Himalayas!)

The elemental body on the earth entered the water unobstructed! There was no hindrance to walk non-stop beneath the surface.

Kadavun - 43

God has incarnated himself as many incarnations, but Lord Sahajanand is supreme amongst the incarnations. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami sings the praises of Shree Hari in his scripture of Saar Siddhi. Swami has narrated his own experiences: 'O Lord Shreeji Maharaj! O Dear God! Lord Ganshyam! You have blessed your devotees with the divine pleasure of your abode. You have incarnated as Matsya (fish), Kruchchha (turtle), Varah (boar), Nrisimha (lion-man) and the other incarnations of the infinite past, to favour your faithful devotees. The souls have not earned much benefit of those incarnations, because those incarnations were not in a human form but were as a boar or a fish. You

restored the earth in your incarnation as boar, but people were not able to do your devotional service. You have travelled the deep waters in your incarnation as a fish and a turtle. In the case of the incarnation as Nrisimha, people were scared of your ferocious image. How could they serve you in such fear? Your form as Vamana was unique and majestic and through that incarnation, you had benedicted King Bali, but the saints, aspirants and devotees were not favoured in those days to serve you personally. As Parashuram, you had destroyed the community of warriors, but the peace loving ascetics had not earned the blissful pleasure of serving you personally.

(Rama was a king. But the poor could not reach Him to do a *poojan* of Lord Rama. If they tried to do *poojan* or *darshan* of Rama, the royal Guards would push them back from the court.)

The royal guards at the court would not allow a poor person access with excuses like 'Who are you? - God is resting at this moment - Lord is at the state assembly with his ministers - This is not a time for personal visits.' Thus, the devotees and aspirants would not be allowed to have face-to-face meetings with a king. Thus small people were not benefited freely in the time of Lord Rama.

Then in time of Bhagwan Shree Krishna:

(In his incarnation as Shree Krishna, God had benedicted innumerable souls and had fulfilled the wishes of his devotees. But Gopal Shree Krishna ascended the royal throne as the King of Kings.)

Shree Krishna had graced the villages of Gokul and Vrindavan to give divine pleasure to his childhood friends and devotees. He lived there with them like a child of a Gopalak family and received selfless love from the entire community of villagers. But, thereafter, as the King of Dwarika, he was not easily available to the common man. Poor devotees were not able to serve him simple meals and devotional prayers. They were not able to do worship of Dwarikadhish Shree Krishna. One is unable to see or meet a King at an unappointed time or without proper permission from his government. Thus the distance between God and his followers was bound to exist and grow.

God then incarnated himself as Buddha and preached the message of nonviolence and peace. Now in time to come, God will incarnate himself as Kalki to remove the burden of sins from the earth.

(God has incarnated himself on the earth to benedict his faithful devotees. God in his present

incarnation gives devotional pleasure to his saints and devotees.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami sings the praises of Shree Hari. In his contemporary incarnation, Maharaj has favoured his saints and devotees and has blessed them with the divine pleasures of Akshardham. Many of the saints and devotees have merged themselves time and time again in the divine image of Shree Hari.

Jodha Bharwad was a humble servant of Shree Hari. He was in the habit of singing devotional songs while attending to his duties. This was like an unbroken *Japa* of the God's names. While milking the cows early in the morning, he sang this devotional song:

(Darling Bal Krishna comes to the bank of Jamuna. He comes all of a sudden and invites his friends to join him. He breaks the earthen water-pots and speaks charmingly in his child-like style. Gopis are discussing among themselves the child-like ways of Lord Balkrishna.)

Shreeji Maharaj heard him singing this devotional song, when he passed by him during his visit to the royal court of Dada Khachar. Shreeji Maharaj looked at him with a soft smile on his face and inquired, "Who was *Kanudo* that you remembered?"

Jodha Bharvad pointed out the milk stream to Shreeji Maharaj while milking the cow and said politely, "Maharaj! I remembered this Balkrishna."

Jodha Bharvad took a bowl of filtered and fresh milk and presented it to Shreeji Maharaj, "Maharaj! Please have it."

Shreeji Maharaj held it in both his hands and had the milk whilst standing there in front of him. Thus God, who is not available to the *Rishis* and ascetics despite their painful penance and meditation, has favoured his innocent devotees through his blissful *darshan* and by having milk and meals from his devotees.

(Bhagwan Sahajanand has showered his divine pleasure to please his devout followers. Lord Sahajanand gives pleasure to mankind.)

Lord Shreeji Maharaj favours his Satsangi followers.

Kadavun - 44

This is a story/episode, narrated here to show the divine love and affection of Lord Shree Hari. The temple at Gadhpur was being constructed as per the orders of Lord Shree Hari. Shreeji Maharaj himself was guiding the teams at the site at each stage of planning and construction. The aspirants, devotees and the saints too were carrying the stones and cleaning the ground to help the masons and sculptors in the speedy construction of the temple. Sadguru Dharmswaroopanand Swami was cleaning the floor and the walls to remove unwanted lumps of lime. The buildings were constructed in those days by using lime instead of Portland cement. The lumps of lime were falling on the uncovered back of Swami who was sweeping the floor. Shreeji Maharaj saw this when he came to the hall. He went there silently and removed with his hand the lumps pasted on the back of Swami. Shreeji Maharaj then said to him, "Brahmchariji! Please come! I want to have a heart-to-heart meeting."

Shreeji Maharaj took him in his embrace, hugged him heartily and conveyed his hearty pleasure for his devotional service.

One, who has served Lord Sahajanand Swami, has nothing more to do for his ultimate benediction. The Supreme Lord cannot be compared to any other incarnation of his. The Lord has incarnated himself repeatedly on the earth in his various images and forms and that too was not limited to the earth but he has incarnated on all the fourteen *Lokas* to emancipate souls living in different planes. But none of these incarnations can be compared with the majesty and divinity of Lord Sahajanand Swami:

(Shree Hari's pleasure is profound and immense. He has established oneness with all his followers to give them divine pleasure).

The cat ate all the loaves

(God had meals with his humble devotees. He played with them and showered his mercy upon all of us. He showered his divine pleasure to please his followers and eradicated their torments.)

The aunt of Dada Khachar was a God fearing devout lady. Devout lady Somafoi was a faithful devotee of Lord Shree Hari. She was simple by nature and free from the worldly tricks and conspiracy. God likes such innocent souls. He is bound by the rope of selfless love and runs hastily to be with his sin-free devotees. Somafoi was in the habit of remembering God and his divine episodes

during her householder chores. In all her chores of cleaning utensils or cooking meals, she kept her mind attached firmly in the blissful image of Lord Shree Hari. A true Satsangi lives constantly in the company of God, by remembering God during his duties. Those, who are not a Satsangi, never remember God, but remember friends and relatives.

While arranging the loaves in a clean container and placing it in the wooden chest for storage of milk products and meals, she thought once that the loaves were crisp and soft enough to meet the tastes of Lord Shree Hari. The loaves were suitable for the meals of Lord Shreeji Maharaj. Thinking again and again about Shreeji Maharaj, she shut the doors, held her walking stick and went to the local market to buy something. Lord Shree Hari, drawn by invisible threads of selfless love, desired to fulfil the wish of his faithful devotee. Shree Hari ran to her house, opened the door secretly and ate the tasteful crust of all the loaves. Then he hid himself in a dark corner of the room.

Somafoi came back to her house, refreshed by cleansing herself she opened the chest to have meals, but she found all the loaves crushed and broken. She stared for a while at the loaves and cursed in outburst, "That mischievous cat has spoiled my loaves! The cat had desecrated my meals. I will beat the cat hard with my stick. I will have to correct the cat."

Shreeji Maharaj heard her screams and shouts. He came out secretly and said, "Somafoi! To whom are you angry?"

Somafoi said, "I am angry at that rowdy cat who has broken my loaves and desecrated the meal. I will beat him badly tomorrow. He cannot escape my punishment because he has forced me to cook the meal again to present *thaal* and then have the meal myself."

Shreeji Maharaj said, "Somafoi! The cat has not eaten your loaves. I myself have."

Somafoi responded cheerfully, "O Maharaj! You have favoured me by granting *prasadam* to this poor soul. I am redeemed. I am completely fulfilled."

But her devotional pleasure of the holy *prasadam* receded very soon and in a remorseful voice, she prayed, "Maharaj! Destiny is not in my favour. Due to my ill luck, I spoke hastily and abusively and treated you as a cat. O God! Please forgive me for my unsuitable words."

She cried profusely and surrendered at the lotus feet of Maharaj "Maharaj! I am foolish. Forgive my faults. Be kind to me and bless me with your blissful *darshan*."

There are many episodes and occasions where Shreeji Maharaj had showered his divine pleasure to his dear devotees:

Shreeji Maharaj has left no stone unturned to liberate his devotees. Shree Hari liberated the souls with holy company and blissful *darshan*. Aspirant souls should surrender unconditionally for self-emancipation.

Pada - 11

(God bestows divine pleasure to all his devotees by incarnating himself on the earth. God has consigned them to the divine abode of *Brahman Mahol*.)

Lord Shreeji Maharaj was having a bath at Vadtal Dham. The sacred waters flowed from Maharaj's body to form a stream and a few children at a distance were bathing playfully in the stream of such '*Prasadi Jalam*'. Shree Hari heard the cheers and joyful sound of the children. Shreeji Maharaj asked his saints about the sound. The Brahmchari said, "Maharaj, children are having joy of bathing in your bathing water that has streamed towards them. They are playing with the water in their palm and bathing each other by pouring it on them."

Shreeji Maharaj said, "They shall be Indra - the king of the heavens, in their next birth."

These kids who did nothing such as penance, *Japa* or *Vratta* but have enjoyed *prasadi* water in their play, have received the highest virtuous fruits of such an innocent act - supreme attainment of heavenly kingdom! There are many who spend a whole life to gain a village or a district and there are many more, who have tried in vain and ruined their entire life to become a minister or a deputy of a ministry. Here, the kids have secured a whole empire – a supreme empire - to lead the deities. Shreeji Maharaj has blessed them with heavenly empire of Indra, because it was a playful and sincere dip in *prasadi*-water it was an innocent and informal act. Such a bath with knowledge of *prasadi* water and its majesty would have transformed them into the released souls of *Akshara*.

The pleasure and happiness, which is not available to Aja, Isha, Chandra, Surya and other such deities has been made available by Shree Hari to his faithful devotees:

(None else but supreme Lord of Akshardham could give such divine pleasure to his devotees. O Lord! You have come upon this earth to give such divine pleasure to us. Those who have embraced the divine pleasures were very happy with such union.

Displeasure and torments fled away from them. They were freed from the clutches of fear and lived forever in holy company of Shree Hari.)

Lord Sahajanand Swami has created a huge society worldwide by preaching to them the axiomatic religion, universal truth, eternal values and supreme virtues. He has made them free of false affection, harmful tastes, burning desires and false ego, by helping them to receive *Vartamans*. His devotees have won the battles against vices, sins and inner enemies. He had shattered the wall of blind faith and abolished ill customs and evil habits. He had reconstructed the infrastructure of Indian society by putting it on a strong foundation of virtues and values. He had strengthened the sect and expanded it globally.

Kadavun - 45

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami sings the praises of Shree Hari and narrates here the sublime pleasure bestowed upon his devotees by Lord Shree Hari. The pleasures are divine and eternal:

(The pleasures of God are divine and eternal.
Eternal pleasures are available in blissful company of
God. Elsewhere exists only pains and torments.)

The pleasures of the image of God are divine and everlasting. Displeasure and torments dwell elsewhere at other places devoid of the image of God. The fruits of devotion are enormous and great. It lasts for billions of years. It is eternal and firm. Worldly pleasures are insignificant and mortal. The world is without real pleasure and forms a mirage of unreal pleasures. The soul is agile and unsteady like a baby-monkey. The soul runs after the mirage of ephemeral pleasures. He commits injustice, crime and sin of every kind to get money, wealth and objects of desire. The soul knows everything. He knows that the final journey is lonesome and there would be nobody to accompany him. Despite this knowledge, he chases the mirage of pleasures and never looks back until the time of his death. He never thinks about his final destination or aim of life.

(Worldly pleasures are like the water seen in a
mirage. Worldly pleasures are insignificant, instead
be wedded to Lord Shamaria).

The mind will not be detached from the sense objects if the glory and majesty of God are lesser in the heart of the devotee. A devotee will not be able

to concentrate his mind in God, unless the senses and mind are withdrawn from the sense objects. Only reasonable relations and attachment should be maintained towards the children, family, relatives, wealth and assets. A stronger bond or excessive relation spoils the salvation of a devout soul. King Janaka ruled his empire by his body but not by his soul and mind. He was a renounced soul.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that the eternal pleasures, the divine pleasures of God are most difficult to attain. They are not attainable by ordinary souls. To attain worldly pleasures like money and wealth, there is call for hard work. Though elemental by their inherent nature, these pleasures require hard work and well-sustained toil. How then can the pleasure and joy of that attainment which is divine, celestial and eternal, be had by the souls who are lazy, full of malice and without substance? They cannot derive such ultimate attainments. Only virtuous, pious and selfless souls can strive for it.

(Only that which is possessed by a person, can be given away to others. He cannot give other things away. One cannot expect something thing from him which is not in his possession.)

Divine pleasures are attainable only by the will of God. Eternal pleasures belong to God. It is a product of God. Eternal pleasures cannot be borrowed from elsewhere. A potter cannot give a motorcar. It is not within his capacity to possess a costly motorcar. He cannot give it, because he does not have it. Similarly, God holds the reign of *Moksha*. Salvation belongs to the Almighty. Therefore, God is the Supreme Lord of emancipation and ultimate benediction. The soul has to surrender at the lotus feet of God to attain salvation. Surrender to God and attain ultimate benediction.

There should be acute longing for God

You get nothing permanently. Even if we earned five thousand, five *lakhs* or *crores* of rupees every month, the worldly wealth would stay upon this earth. It cannot accompany you in your journey after death. Nobody can take his or her wealth with them. It is better you spend it towards the poor and needy, towards *sadhus* and saints, towards temples, towards free inns/hostels, towards raising trees and forests or towards schools and gurukuls rather than save it to take with you! The wealth spent towards these causes will be the wealth accompanying you in your final journey.

The worldly wise but unenlightened spiritually, think of the world as an object of endless pleasures. They believe in enjoying this life. A rise in spiritual wisdom and the seasoning time of old age teaches us the pains of human life.

Old age is a painful period of human life. But the rise of true knowledge at the end of one's life yields no emancipatory fruits.

Life is neither full of pain nor pleasure. Life is actually sheer joy and celestial pleasure, if we knew how to live it. Life is worth meeting our God. Those who are away from saints and their holy company know nothing about this amazing truth. They waste daily the 21,600 breaths of their life and waste the thirty *crore* such breaths in a short span of fifty years of his life. What have they achieved in each such breath? Have they attained anything? They have merely collected and accumulated many things, which are not to accompany them. This is a major blunder of man.

A devout soul attains *darshan* of God at the ultimate stage of his devotion. Such a single-minded devotee lives in blissful pleasure and eternal happiness.

(God has satisfied the hunger of people who were hungry for his *darshan*. Lord Ganshyam showers his unbound pleasure. Who would be so unfortunate as to live amidst the miseries of worldly life?)

God has blessed the devotees with his blissful *darshan*. Bhagabhai was a simple and innocent man. He was like an innocent child. He was hungry for darshan of God. Hunger, amongst the instincts is strong and most powerful. A hungry man would do anything and everything to satisfy his hunger and he cannot be stopped in his efforts, unless his hunger is satisfied. Bhagabhai was hungry for darshan of Shree Hari and to satisfy the hunger of darshan he was ready to do anything. Somebody told Bhagabhai that God in human form dwelled at Bhuj and graced the house of Shree Gangarambhai. As soon as he got this information, he started for Bhuj, without any consideration of his physical state and the odds to be faced in the long journey. He never thought to take any vehicle for his travel or a tiffin for his meals. With singular thought of darshan of God, he walked and travelled along on foot. When he was tired of the heat and travel, he rested beneath a tree for a while. As he had walked constantly to do darshan of God he was hungry and thirsty.

Lord Shree Hari knew about his devotee and his innocent ways to meet him. He knew about his hunger and thirst and desired at his free will to accompany him in the guise of a Brahmin. Maharaj in the guise of a Brahmin went to Bhagabhai and asked, "Where are you going?"

"I am on way to Bhuj," said Bhagabhai.

"I am also on a visit to Bhuj. Why not travel together? Two will be company," said Maharaj.

Bhagabhai liked the idea and they travelled together. They camped beneath a tree in the evening. Maharaj spread his tiffin of dry meals and offered the meals to Bhagabhai. God and his devotee had the meals together. They spent fifteen days in such journey and finally arrived in Bhuj Nagar. God took good care of Bhagabhai and took him to the house of Gangarambhai. He pointed to the house and said, "Bhagabhai! God dwells there in the house of Gangarambhai. You may visit the place and have soulful darshan of God. I am in a hurry. Please allow me to take your leave." Maharaj turned his back with a gesture of good-bye and disappeared.

Bhagabhai came to the house of Gangarambhai and did darshan of Shree Hari. He realised tranquil bliss in his heart and soul. He attained whatever he desired. He did soulful darshan of Maharaj and felt fully satiated.

Maharaj looked at him and asked, "Who accompanied you here to this place?"

"A kind hearted brahmin had travelled with me. He had offered me meals and water from his own share. I am unfamiliar as to who he was. He came with me to show me the house. He was in hurry to go elsewhere but will be back for your blissful darshan later," said Bhagabhai.

Shreeji Maharaj said, "He was not a Brahmin, but I myself was there to accompany you!"

Bhagabhai said, "O Lord! Your face does resemble his face; who else than you could be there to look after me!"

Real thirst or hunger in a devotee enables the soul to fight all odds and obstacles planted on his path to God and devotion. He paves his own path to attain God.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, 'There should be acute hunger for devotion and darshan of God. A hungry man finds a stale loaf most tasty. If he were not hungry, he would dislike even the taste of dry fruits and sweet dishes. Invoke strong hunger for God and devotion. Realise the glory and majesty of God. Such hunger and realisation are the supreme attainments of human life.'

Kadavun – 46

(One narrates his own experiences. The saints who have experienced it themselves and have known it personally had narrated their experiences and knowledge about God. There are many who knew nothing about it. One cannot say anything without seeing and hugging him personally.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami narrates his own experiences and describes the time he spent in holy company of God. He lived with God for thirty years. Therefore, he said that people, who had not seen or experienced him, would not be able to narrate uniformly and correctly the unique ways of God.

Some describe God as an image with a thousand hands; some narrate him as an image with the eight or four hands. Whatever they narrate is nothing more than hearsay. It is utterly unreliable, because the facts are not based on their own experiences. This is why, some have narrated him as abstract or shapeless and some have narrated him as a pool of brightness – light. Some have said that God pervades every atom of the cosmos and many from them have advocated that God resides in the soul:

(God is shadowless and never touches the earth when he walks. But remarks like the above are not founded on their own experience. They are fictitious narrations.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami narrates the details based on his own experience and describes the image and lifestyle of Shree Hari, which he saw and felt in holy company of God. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami describes the image of God.

(Lord Shree Hari has two hands and two feet. He has cognitive organs such as ears, eyes and nose. His speech is sweet and soft. He lives joyfully in holy company of saints and his followers to give them devotional pleasure. Saints and devotees please him with hearty *poojan* and worship. His pleasure is eternal.)

The old cow has become valorous

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami describes the divine charm of God in human form. God has two beautiful hands and two feet. He has two eyes that resemble the petals of a lotus flower. His nose is shaped like a delicate beak of a parrot. He speaks softly and sweetly. He dwells on the earth to give devotional love to his devotees.

In those times, Shreeji Maharaj dwelled at Gadhpur and celebrated colourful *Samaiya* of Vasant Panchmi. He played with his saints and devotees to give them divine pleasure of his *leelas* in human form. The saints and devotees were in their respective groups on either side of Lord Shree Hari to celebrate the festival of colours. Shreeji Maharaj soaked them with colourful water.

Gopalanand Swami looked at Shree Hari and thought in his mind about the colour festivities. When he thought about the joys and good fortunes of the saints and devotees, he found himself isolated and deprived of celestial pleasures. He picked up quickly a colour sprinkler and filled it from the container. He moved silently to the back of Maharaj and sprayed colourful water on the back of Shreeji Maharaj.

Shreeji Maharaj turned his back and saw Gopalanand Swami holding a colour sprinkler in his hands. Maharaj laughed at him and said, "This old cow has become valorous for a moment," and showered his hearty pleasure to the elderly saint – Sadguru Gopalanand Swami. Shree Hari and the saints went thereafter to the holy river Ghela to have a refreshing bath.

Lord Shree Hari plays, eats and enjoys happy moments with his saints and devotees. Now about the attributes of God:

(God manifests himself in human form to give devotional pleasure to aspirant souls. Unintelligent and ignorant people address him as abstract and shapeless. Lord Sahajanand is most pleasurable.)

Sadguru Premanand Swami sings:

(Lord Girdhar – Sri Krishna – is great. Lord Shree Hari is the eternal source of love and light. Lord Shree Hari dwells at *Brahm Mahol* in his divine human form. Lord Shree Hari displays at times his divine *leela* in his divine form holding conch, disc, mace and lotus flower in his four hands. Lord Yogeshwar, Jagadish are the forms of Shree Hari, worshipped by Shree Nanda and Sunanda.

God is always in human form – visible to us to do *poojan* and worship of him. God dwells among us to emancipate his devotees and aspirants. Here is an example: There was once a faithful woman, chaste and sincere. She served her husband and treated him like her personal God. She served breakfast, tea and hot – meals to her husband as a form of *poojan*/worship. She always had meals after serving it to her husband. Her husband was very happy with her. They lived happily together for a long time. Good fortune knocked on their door and the husband got an assignment in a foreign country. He left his hometown and served in an overseas station. His wife continued her *vratt* by offering meals to the photo-image of her husband. She had her daily meals after serving it first to the photo-image. She spent two years in this manner. Her husband came back

after two years. Now, to whom would she serve the meals? To the photo of her husband or to her real husband?

Of course, she would serve the meals to her husband. She would not serve it to his photo. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says, "God himself dwells amongst us. We should serve meals to God dwelling amongst us. We should do *pooja* and worship of him. Uddhava Sampradaya believes in the visible image of God – God in human form. The image of God installed in the temple for *poojan* and worship are visible and real. It is in human form and shape. This is the cardinal principle preached by all religious scriptures. The visible Lord and the visible saints benedict devotees and aspirants.

Kadavun – 47

(Don't waste your life in insignificant activities. Think and act wisely. You have a diamond, now stop washing in soil! Don't waste your youthful days in sleep and don't disturb the peace of nighttime.)

Man wastes his life and his youth in insignificant works and postpones devotion and meditation until later. He ignores significant duties and runs after mirage like sense objects. Human life is like a precious jewel. We have such a precious life. We should not wash it away in soil to make it dirtier. Stop chasing wealth and the world. Stop instantly and return to devotion and meditation.

Swami asks us to act immediately for the ultimate good of the self. Food and the meals should be thereafter and the master or employer should be last. Devotion and meditation should be attended to first. Do devotion; visit the nearest temple to pay your respects to God. Donate liberally to help the needy. These virtuous rewards accompany us after our death to join us in the other worlds. Assign top priority to these duties and then look after your basic needs such as meals. Offer sacred meals to God first and have thereafter *prasadam* to satisfy your hunger. Stop running hither and dither before a meal. Have your meals leisurely. Then follow your schedule and perform acts related to your master or employer – your occupation and profession. Be honest and sincere in your trade, business or service.

Throughout the prime of his life – during the day - he acts lazily, without any significant work or assignment, and at night – in old age – runs here and there hastily. Such person is good for nothing. *Bhajan*, *Kirtan*, devotion and *Satsang* should be attended to regularly during the prime of one's life because weakness of old age and a trembling body prevents the soul in its spiritual

strides. God looks at our old age and scolds us for not attending to devotional activities during our youth. The soul had not attended *Katha* sessions when the body was youthful and ears were receptive to the sound and voice, now in old age the ears have no capacity to listen and the eyes have no power to see!

(Act according to the time. Untimely acts are harmful. Untimely acts are most laborious and bear no fruit. Gauge the pulse of time and act accordingly.)

Divine masterkey

The soul aspires for eternal pleasure. He runs here and there in search of eternal pleasures, but all efforts are in vain. The cycle of worldly life rotates constantly and grief and pains come uninvited on the path of life. No effort is needed to invite grief or sorrow. They are uninvited guests. The soul has no capacity to push away the pains of life.

There are many who enquire about elixir to remove pains and torments of life. Is there any medicine? Is there any elixir – a medicinal herb - to end the pains of life? The answer is yes. Yes, there is one elixir to remove every kind of pain. There is a medicine to make life most pleasurable. That unfailing medicine is “Shikshapatri”.

Lord Shree Hari preached the tenets and doctrines. Lord Shree Hari himself wrote this Shikshapatri to guide and escort us on the path of life and ultimate benediction. Shikshapatri is very simple and very easy to understand. It is most practical to practice it in our daily life. It is the word form of Lord Shree Hari. Grief and pains dare not confront it. Practise it most attentively and live a happy and peaceful life. Don't act carelessly in regard to the tenets of Shikshapatri. Have absolute faith and trust in the orders and commandments of Lord Shree Hari.

(Act in accordance to time. Do devotion of God manifest in human form. That would be the most fruitful moment of your life and the world would be yours.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to fight fearlessly against the pains. Bear the pains of the world and do devotion of God. Renounce the things of your liking, renounce ego and false pride, bear the pains of the world and do devotion of Lord Shree Hari.

(Nothing shall be left undone, if these few things are done sincerely. We have been benefited by birth as a human being. Surrender absolutely at the lotus feet of the visible Lord. Do devotion of Shree Swaminarayan Bhagwan. This is the cardinal preaching of all the scriptures.)

Do devotion. Devotion includes everything. Do devotion through your thoughts, speech and action. Trust in God and be faithful to him.

God is wise in evolving the world

Trust always in God. God is wise and thoughtful. Have absolute faith and trust in the acts of God. There were two friends. Both were educated and knowledgeable, but one amongst them was atheist. He never believed in God. Once, they went for a long walk and came to a bank of a river. The mango groves, temple and pleasant riverside helped to merge the self in the bounty of nature. The friend who believed in God, said to his friend, "Let us go to the temple to salute God."

The atheist said, "I don't believe in God. You may go, if you desire."

The theist friend said, "Why? God will not lose even a fraction of his majesty or divinity, if a person like you has not believed in him."

The atheist said, "God is unintelligent and mad. There is no sense in believing in him. There is no benefit in believing him."

The theist was upset by such insulting comments. That stupid fellow placed his God in the rank of fools. He was very sad for his friend.

He disliked the observations passed by his atheist friend and rebuked out rightly, "You have no right to say such bad things about our God. Mind your language. I hardly bother about a friend who has no respect for my God."

But the atheist was in his own world of freedom and freethinking. He argued further to sell his idea, "I am sure, God is mad. Look at the riverside near its bank. There are creepers, thin and weak like tiny strings. Its branches are pale, thin and fragile, but the fruits they bear are large and heavy. They are watermelons, weighing 10 to 25 kilos each. And look at those large and leafy trees. They are mango trees with pillar like stem and very strong branches. But the fruits (mango) they bear are very small. Now tell me, is there any sign of logic? Those weak and fragile creepers have to hold very large fruits and these huge trees bear tiny fruits! In fact those mango trees should bear the fruits weighing 20 to 40 kilos each."

As soon he tendered such 'wise' counsel, a wave of wind came from nowhere and shook the branches of the mango tree. Many mangoes fell on the ground and one such mango hit the nose of the atheist. Though the fruit was

small like a berry, it caused him to bleed profusely with unbearable pain. He realised that God's acts were wise and well thought out. A mango in the size of a watermelon would have crushed him under its force and weight. He realised his own fault and began to believe in God.

There are many who always think opposingly. They reform themselves when they injure themselves by their own wrongs. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami asks us to follow the teachings of a *Satpurusha*.

Kadavun – 48

(The beautiful book of *Saar Siddhi* is a wholesome scripture. A spiritually wise soul should think upon it. Devotees of God would love it. It would remove pains to give devotional pleasure.)

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami is convinced that the scripture of *Saar Siddhi* will be loved by aspirant souls. Those who aspire to attain the visible Lord would be happy in read this unique scripture. If they enjoyed the scripture, they would surely be freed from the shackles of birth and death. Renounce the world to surrender at the lotus feet of God.

God will love those who read or listen to this scripture, because of their faith and trust in God. I have narrated the sublime feelings of detachment and renunciation. It is simple and easy to understand. Each stanza and every line in this scripture helps the reader to remember the blissful name of Lord Swaminarayan.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami explains here clearly the facts about devotion, knowledge and ethical duties. Swami himself is an idol of renunciation. He had sacrificed his whole life on account of Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan. The entire Satsang respects his scriptures.

Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami himself has said that the book of *Saar Siddhi* contains nectar – the essence of everything. Whatever he has realised, he has tested and proved thoroughly, to test the truthfulness of it before presenting it to us.

(Real aspirants would love to have it. I have processed thoroughly the raw paddy; to cook tasty meals of well processed rice.)

(Whoever reads, listens or practises the scripture of Saar Siddhi, shall be emancipated by the grace of God.)

Pada - 11

(It is rise of good fortune. Many have been redeemed. There is no debt to be paid. All have attained the visible Lord. They are not without support. All have their master – Lord. There is nothing to fear of other deities. Lord Shree Hari himself has held our hand.)

We have our Lord and Master

Who is an orphan? Who is without support? One, who has no master, lord or support is an orphan or without support. But we have eternal support. We have the Lord – divine and supreme. Those who have support of their lord or master are not scared of anything. They are fearless souls. The planets and stars trouble only the souls who have no support of their Lord. Those who have surrendered to Lord Purushottam Narayan have nothing to worry. The planets instil fear in others; even Kala and Yama are scared of them, because the Lord may not favour them. Cattle without a master are stray cattle. They roam here and there and enter into the fields and farms of others to eat grass, hay and other standing crops. To protect their farm produce, the farmers beat such stray cattle. Similarly, unclaimed people – the people who have not surrendered to a master or Lord, the people who have not surrendered to God, the people who have not worshipped God, act limitlessly without doing any *Vratta* and eat forbidden meals. They are like stray cattle. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that the most fortunate souls are those who have submitted themselves at the lotus feet of Shree Hari:

(We are not poor. We are not weak. We are rich and wealthy through our wealth of devotion and the pleasure of God.)

We have received unexpected pleasure. We have not known in advance about our present birth as a human being. It is a surprise gift from God. It is our good fortune that we are living with God. We are most fortunate as we have with us God in visible form. God lives with us to have meals and *thaals* from us. Who else would be fortunate like us? Swami believes and trusts most in *Nishtha*. The devotees should inculcate *Nishtha* (faith) by study of this scripture. Don't

think that God is away from you. Always think that God is on your side - God is with you. Install God in the seat of your heart:

(I am very happy. My pleasures know no bound. I have attained that which is most unattainable. There is nothing more to attain. It is heavy rain of nectar. I am redeemed – with ultimate emancipation.)

Dwell forever in the divine image of God. Do devotion with sublime pleasure. Do it happily. You shall be fully satiated by the virtuous rewards of worship and devotion. Lord Swaminarayan Bhagwan has manifested himself eternally in this Satsang of his. We are dependant followers of Lord Shree Hari. We have received his doctrine of worship, *Kanthi*, *Chandalo*, Scriptures, holy fellowship, *Sants*, Temples and Acharya. We are the most fortunate souls upon this earth.

(This is a great time. We have received our God. Sadguru Nishkulanand Swami says that we have won the world and heart of mankind by our devotional ways.)

We know about the majesty and divine powers of *prasadi* items of Lord Shree Hari. Lord Shree Hari himself dwells in the image of Lord Narnarayan residing at our temple in Bhuj. We should surrender to him. We should live according to his will. We should pray and beg for *Satsang* in his benign presence.

A tree grows greener if we give water to it. Satsang grows greener if we attend to it regularly. It will die dry if we neglect it, without devotion.

Earning becomes a pleasurable activity, if we were to know the value of money. Listening becomes a pleasurable activity if we knew the majesty of *Katha*.

Man is burning inwardly due to the three kinds of fires. The scripture of Saar Siddhi extinguishes the inner fire and heals the burns caused by this fire. This scripture destroys the fire of desire and purifies the soul. It helps the soul to do *darshan* of God. If read, listened to or organised a *parayan* of this scripture, God would surely manifest and favour the devotee with his blissful *darshan*.

Thus ends here the scripture of Saar Siddhi.