

**STORIES OF FIVE GREAT  
SANATAN SAINTS**  
**Swami Chinmayananda, Narsi  
Bhagat, Samarth Swami Ramdas,  
Saint Raidas and Saint Samrat  
Agrasen**  
**(Based on Sanatan Stories)**

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**AUTHOR**  
**Dr Yatendra Sharma**



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**PUBLISHER**

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**HEARTFELT ADMIRATION**

**ADARNEEY BHAI SHRI DYLAN WADIA**



**FOR BEING ROLE MODEL FOR YOUNGER  
GENERATION.**

**FOR BALACING PROFESSIONAL, FAMILY AND  
SPRITUAL LIFE.**

**FOR DEDICATED SERVICE TO HUMANITY, LORD  
AND SANATAN SAINTS.**

**FOR GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT AND GUIDING  
LIGHT TO THOSE HAVING LIFE'S MOST  
DIFFICULT, UNCHARTED PATHS.**

**MAY THE BLESSINGS OF LORD AND SANATAN  
SAINTS BE ALWAYS ON YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.**

## SUBMISSION

The Publisher and the Author are publishing this book, ‘Stories of Five Sanatan Saints - Swami Chinmayananda, Narsi Bhagat, Samarth Swami Ramdas, Saint Raidas and Saint Samrat Agrasen’, based on Sanatan stories in honour of the 75<sup>th</sup> year of the first public Pravachan (2026) delivered by Swami Chinmayananda Ji in 1951 in Pune, India. The aim is that younger generation of Sanatanies are able to stay connected to their Vedic roots.

Shrimadbhagwadgita states:

**बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।  
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥**

***Bahūnām janmanāmante jñānavānmām prapadyate  
Vāsudevaḥ sarvamiti sa mahatma su-durlabhaḥ.  
(7-19)***

*After many births and deaths, he who is actually in knowledge surrenders unto Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is. Such a great soul is very rare.*

Self-realized souls such as these Saints - Swami Chinmayananda, Narsi Bhagat, Samarth Swami Ramdas, Saint Raidas and Saint Samrat Agrasen, preached that material prosperity does not support us at the time of death and that, chasing material pleasures or desires is a waste because this does not pave the path for union with God which is the objective of human birth. The soul is as pious as the Lord (Atmaram) and that being born as a human is like receiving that precious gem which can fetch the aim of the human birth - liberation. These saints encouraged people to use their human lives to attain oneness with God. Using their literary contributions, these Saints tried to show the difference between a spiritually awakened life and spiritually ignorant life and that, if human life is spent without recognizing the true nature of the soul,

it is like living a dormant life. Unconditional love for the Lord can bring one into complete devotion, faith and surrender to the Lord.

Shrimadbhagwadgita further states:

**यो मामेवमसम्मूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।  
स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥**

*Yo māmevam asammūḍho jānāti puruṣottamam.  
Sa sarva-vidbhajati mām sarva-bhāvena bhārata. (15-19)*

*Whoever knows Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without doubting, is the knower of everything. He therefore engages himself in full devotional service to Me, O son of Bharata.*

As staunch devotees of the Lord, these Saints were social reformers of great courage. They penned the priceless literary Sanatan gem and continued to nourish the global roots of Sanatan Dharma. Srila Prabhupad explained in his commentary on Bhagwadgita in his book, 'Bhagavad Gita as It Is' (15-19).

*There are many philosophical speculations about the constitutional position of the living entities and the Supreme Absolute Truth. The imperfect knower goes on simply speculating about the Absolute Truth, but the perfect knower, without wasting his valuable time, engages directly in Lord consciousness, the devotional service of the Supreme Lord.*

These Saints were such perfect and rare devotees.

**चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।  
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥**

*Catur-vidhā bhajante mām janāḥ su-kṛtino'rjuna.  
Arto jijñāsuraṁ arthārthī jñānī ca bharatarṣabha. (7-16)*

*O best among the Bhāratas, four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me – the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and he who is searching for knowledge of the Absolute.*

**तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।  
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥**

*Teṣāṃ jñānī nitya-yukta eka-bhaktirviśiṣyate.  
Priyo hi jñāninotyarthamaḥ sa ca mama priyaḥ. (7-17)*

*Of these, the one who is in full knowledge and who is always engaged in pure devotional service is the best. For I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me.*

We can learn a lot from these Saint's lives. Always in the mood of self-realisation, always chanting the name of God, they surrendered and submitted completely to the Lord's Will with pure trust and unconditional love. There are incidents in their lives when the Lord intervened but these Saints did not ask any benefit for themselves and accepted whatever the Lord wished to give to them. Directly blessed on multiple occasions by Lord Himself, their lives were their message:

*Simple living and high thinking.*

As the Lord himself says in Shrimadbhagavad Gita:

**मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।  
मामेवैष्यसि युक्तवैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥**

*Man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṃ namaskuru.  
Māmevaiṣyasi yuktvaivamātmānaṃ Mat-parāyaṇaḥ.  
(9- 34)*

*Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisances to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me.*

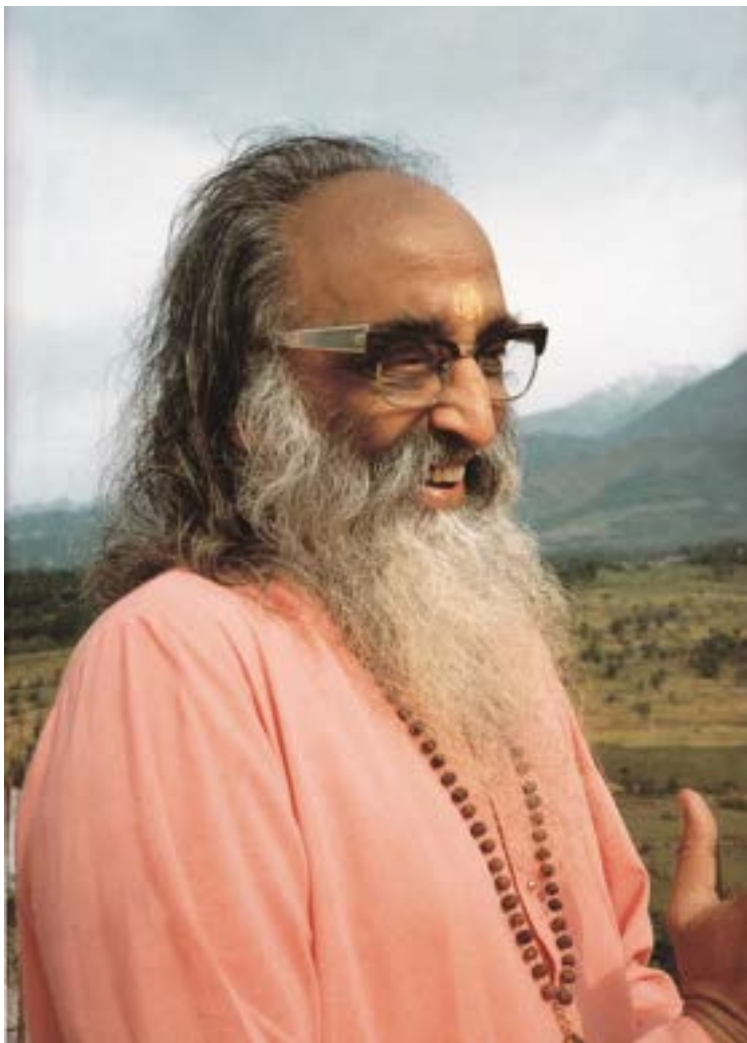
May we learn from their teachings and strive to serve the Lord in all that we think, say and do.

Yours humbly,  
Dr Yatendra Sharma  
President



**Shri Ram Katha Sansthan, Perth (Inc)**

## SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA SARASWATI



## Introduction

Swami Chinmayananda was one of the great ascetics of modern India, a tireless spiritual teacher who, for more than four decades, carried the timeless message of Vedanta—peace, strength, and inner fulfillment—to both the learned and the common masses across the world.

Though academically accomplished with postgraduate degrees in law and literature, he found no lasting satisfaction in formal education alone. During the Indian Independence Movement of 1942, he actively participated in the struggle against British rule. His repeated imprisonments did not weaken his resolve; rather, they deepened his commitment to the nation's freedom.

The poverty, suppression, and starvation he witnessed during this turbulent period left a profound impression on him. The suffering of his fellow Indians transformed his inner outlook. He resolved to renounce worldly pursuits and embrace the life of a Sannyasi, dedicating himself to elevating the moral and ethical consciousness of society.

Under the guidance of great saints such as Swami Sivananda and the Himalayan hermit Swami Tapovanam—reverently known as the “Glory of the Himalayas”—he underwent intense austerities. From them he learned the scriptures, discipline, and the essence of a spiritual life. He also felt an inspiring inner call from Mother Ganga, a transformative experience that redirected the course of his life.

In one of his writings, Swamiji reflected:

“Born in the Himalayas, She rushes to the plains giving life and nourishment to all. This shows that fulfillment of any possession

is in sharing it with others. This motivated me to do something for my fellow countrymen and women.”

Inspired by this spirit of selfless sharing, he traveled extensively across India. After a year of pilgrimage and observation, he delivered his first public lecture titled “*Let Us Be Hindus*” at a Ganesha temple in Pune in December 1951. Thus, was born the Chinmaya Movement. In 2026, the 75th anniversary of that historic lecture is being commemorated.

From that moment onward, Swamiji became a global spiritual ambassador, touching the hearts of millions. He addressed scholars and students at institutions such as Harvard, MIT, and numerous esteemed universities across Asia, America, and Europe. He was not merely an inspiring individual, but a dynamic institution in himself.

His name became synonymous with the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads. At a time when Indian culture and spirituality needed rejuvenation, he initiated a powerful revival grounded in scriptural clarity and practical application.

After his Mahasamadhi, the spiritual luminary Sri Eknath Easwaran remarked:

“Swamiji was one of the greatest spiritual teachers of modern India. His legacy will always remain in the form of the global Chinmaya Mission. He authored more than 300 books and wrote commentaries on various scriptural texts. His objective was to bring ‘Hindus back to Hinduism.’ He believed that Vedanta was the spiritual birthright of every human being and that its earnest study and practice could make a Christian a better Christian, a Muslim a better Muslim, and a Hindu a better Hindu, as it was universally applicable. He was a universal person in that he related to all as a true friend, philosopher, and guide, irrespective of age, class, caste, vocation, religion, or nationality.”

Indeed, his life stands as a luminous example of scholarship united with service, renunciation blended with action, and spirituality expressed through compassion.

Let us learn enduring lessons of spiritual strength and selfless service from his life.

## Birth and Education

It was an intensely humid afternoon in the month of Vaisakha Shukla Paksha Shasthi, Monday, Vikram Samvat 1973—May 8, 1916—in Ernakulam, Kerala. Around 2 PM, labor pains began for Shrimati Paru Kuttu. Her husband, Justice Kutta Menon, a respected judge in Kerala and nephew of the Maharaja of Cochin, was attending court when urgent news was sent for him to return home.

Acting swiftly, he arranged for a team of doctors to attend to his wife. At 9:10 PM, a lady doctor emerged from the labor room with joyous news—Justice Menon had been blessed with a son.

The household was filled with celebration. Sweets were distributed among friends and relatives. According to tradition, a learned pundit was invited to cast the child's horoscope. He was named Balkrishna.

Upon examining the horoscope, the pundit was astonished by its strength. With the Sun exalted in Aries in the tenth house of fame, Jupiter in its own house in the ninth house of spirituality, and the Moon in Cancer conjoined with Ketu, the chart suggested that this child was destined for extraordinary spiritual leadership. Saturn and Venus in the twelfth house indicated a life of discipline and renunciation. The pundit predicted that the child would guide millions toward Dharma.

While the father rejoiced at this prophecy, the mother felt a quiet sadness. As her firstborn, she had dreamed of seeing him rise to prominence in society like his father—not as a monk.

Time gradually reconciled her heart to destiny. She became deeply attached to young Balkrishna. Sadly, she passed away when he was only five years old, during the birth of her third child. Under family

persuasion, Justice Menon remarried his late wife's sister, Smt. Kochunarayani Amma. She lovingly embraced Balkrishna as her own and affectionately called him "Balan."

Balan grew up in a warm and affectionate extended family, surrounded by cousins, uncles, and aunts. Charming and mischievous, he was adored by all. Brilliant and quick-witted, he completed his lessons effortlessly. He loved reading, swimming, and badminton. Full of humor and creativity, he excelled at mimicry and delighted in playful teasing. Even as a child, he displayed remarkable acting talent, dynamism, and originality.

He attended English Modern School, where he learned Malayalam and Sanskrit and developed fluency in multiple languages. The family strictly observed Sanatan traditions, gathering every evening at sunset for Satsang and Puja.

In later years, Swamiji fondly recalled those evenings:

"As I sat in the Pooja room waiting for the Arathi, I would gaze at the pictures of the Gods. The one I loved most was Lord Shiva. I would study His form—the Ganga flowing from His matted locks, serpents adorning Him, the crescent moon shining upon His compassionate face. I would close my eyes and try to recreate the image in my mind, then open them again to compare. I repeated this until I could see Him clearly with closed eyes. At that time, countless questions arose in my mind about the meaning of life and existence—questions that remained unanswered until years later."

He completed his schooling at Shree Rama Varma High School, Kochi (1921–1928), and Vivekodayam School, Thrissur (1928–1932). He pursued his FA at Maharaja's College, Ernakulam (1932–1934), and his BA at St. Thomas College, Trichur (1935–1937). Later, he enrolled at Lucknow University (1940–1943),

earning postgraduate degrees in literature and law while also studying journalism.

By the age of 24, Balan had completed his postgraduate education. He excelled academically and participated actively in extracurricular pursuits—tennis, debating, literature, and theatre. Known as a lively and spirited companion, he remained large-hearted and inclusive.

During his time at Lucknow University, he became actively involved in the struggle against British rule, distributing leaflets to inspire national pride and independence. A warrant was issued for his arrest, compelling him to go underground temporarily. However, his resolve could not remain hidden. He returned openly, was arrested, and imprisoned.

In the harsh and overcrowded prison environment, he endured months of suffering. With daily sights of lifeless bodies being carried away, he confronted the stark reality of death. Deep philosophical questions began to occupy his mind:

“What is the meaning of life? Is there something permanent beyond this fleeting existence?”

Weakened by imprisonment, he contracted typhus fever. With little hope of recovery, he was carried out one night and left by the roadside on the outskirts of the city. Recalling the incident, Swamiji later said:

“The British officer threw me out in a street. I had contracted typhus in prison. The police did not want the infection to spread. Though I had no hope for life, God had planned otherwise. A kindly Christian Indian lady took me into her home and cared for me like her own son. Later she said my nose reminded her of her son serving in the army. Perhaps one can say that I was saved by my nose.”

After weeks of struggle and patient care, he gradually regained his strength and recovered—unaware that this survival would one day shape the destiny of millions.

## Towards Spiritualism

After regaining his health, Balan was eager to resume life with renewed vigor. In 1945, he moved to Delhi and joined the editorial staff of the national newspaper *The National Herald*. His deep urge for self-expression and his desire to contribute to the rebuilding of the nation quickly earned him a reputation as a dynamic and often controversial journalist.

He fearlessly voiced his views on Indian history, culture, and pressing contemporary issues, including the inevitability of independence and the social challenges facing the country. His writings revealed his innate compassion for humanity. While his sympathies lay with the underprivileged and oppressed, he also moved comfortably among the privileged classes, observing and analyzing society from both perspectives.

Gifted with eloquence, sharp intellect, and an extraordinary sense of humor, Balan became a popular member of a local club. He was a prominent voice in debates on social and political issues, often engaging in spirited discussions. Yet beneath his youthful ambition and outward success, he began to sense a profound emptiness in what was called the “good life.”

Behind the noisy parties, fashionable attire, and superficial conversations, he perceived dissatisfaction, agitation, and even despair. The selfishness and insensitivity of the ruling elite struck him deeply. These observations stirred within him memories long buried—memories of Sanatan Dharma and the quiet spiritual impressions of his childhood.

He recalled the peace of falling asleep with sacred mantras on his lips and the reassuring image of his grandmother, who had spent her final years chanting the name of Lord Krishna. Gradually, sadhana returned to his life. He resumed spiritual practice with a

refreshing realization that perhaps life held something deeper than political struggle, social gatherings, and intellectual argumentation—though he had yet to discover what that deeper truth was.

In later reflections, Swamiji shared that this inner stirring led him to an intense study of philosophy, both Indian and European. Silently and privately, he began chanting the mantra “Om Namah Shivaya” each night before sleep.

During this period, he immersed himself in Sanatan literature. The works of saints such as Swami Sivananda, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Ramtirtha, Sri Aurobindo, and Raman Maharshi became his constant companions. Among them, the writings of Swami Sivananda influenced him most profoundly. The simple yet powerful philosophy—“Be good, do good, serve humanity, love everyone, purify your heart, meditate on the Almighty, realize the Self, and attain liberation”—deeply resonated with him.

Though convinced that this path promised true peace, lingering questions remained in his mind. Determined to seek clarity at the source, he journeyed in the summer of 1947 to the Ashram of Swami Sivananda in the Himalayas, then a vibrant centre of spiritual life in India. The radical young journalist surrendered at the holy feet of Swami Sivananda to understand the true meaning of life and spirituality.

His very first meeting with Swami Sivananda shattered all preconceived notions about spirituality. The Master’s dignity, brilliance, and radiant aura of divinity captivated him. Beyond the serene Himalayan surroundings, Balan discovered an intensely active environment where spiritual disciplines and social service projects were pursued with dedication. This dynamism greatly appealed to his energetic mind.

Swami Sivananda immediately recognized Balan's spiritual potential and gave him special attention. He would often tell him, "God has given you great wisdom and intelligence to guide the world. Why not use it for Him? You are destined to be a Sannyasi."

Balan stayed at the Ashram for a month. When he returned to Delhi to resume his journalistic duties, he was inwardly transformed. A year later, he moved to Rishikesh, though for some time he continued traveling back and forth to Delhi to maintain his professional commitments.

On February 25, 1949—an auspicious Shivaratri day—he permanently joined the Sivananda Ashram and accepted the order of Sannyasa. Swami Sivananda initiated him into monastic life and bestowed upon him the name **Swami Chinmayananda Saraswati**, meaning "one who revels in the bliss of pure consciousness."

Swami Chinmayananda studied and served at the Sivananda Ashram for some time. Deeply devoted to Jnana Yoga, he followed his Guru's instruction to master the scriptures. Accordingly, he was sent to Uttarkashi to study Vedanta under the great master Swami Tapovan Ji Maharaj.

For eight years, Swami Chinmayananda lived in the high Himalayas of Uttarkashi, studying Vedantic scriptures at the feet of Swami Tapovan Ji Maharaj. Later, he recalled:

"It was not easy. Swami Tapovan Ji Maharaj was a strict disciplinarian and a demanding teacher. He never repeated a lesson twice. He gave me residence in a cowshed, with a stone as my pillow. Yet this austere life did not deter me. I was determined to gain Vedic knowledge from the great master. I soon became his most favored student. He would call me 'Uttam Adhikari'—the best student. Often, I would sit all night in meditation in the quiet

forest or on the banks of the Ganges. I was fully dedicated to my studies and to Guru Seva.”

After several years, feeling that he had gained sufficient understanding of the sacred scriptures—the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras, and others—he humbly requested permission from his Guru to return to the plains and share this wealth of knowledge with the people.

Instead, Swami Tapovan Ji Maharaj advised him first to wander as a renunciate—living on alms among the very society he once belonged to. Obediently following his Guru’s command, Swami Chinmayananda traveled on foot for six months, living on bhiksha, sleeping in ashrams, temples, and sometimes beneath wayside trees.

He completed this tour of India in November 1951 and returned to Tapovan Ashram in Uttarkashi. His resolve had only deepened. He was convinced that his life’s mission was to bring the rich yet neglected Vedantic philosophy to every corner of the world. Having witnessed both spiritual and economic decline across the land, he resolved to conduct a series of “Gita Jnana Yagnas” in major cities in India and abroad.

Yet as an obedient disciple, he would not act without his Guru’s blessing. Once again, he sought permission. This time, Swami Tapovan Ji Maharaj not only granted approval but wholeheartedly blessed the mission.

He instructed:

“All right, go and start your Jnana Yagna discourses. But remember, do not concern yourself with the number of people attending. Even if only four people sit in the audience—including yourself—continue your discourse.”

The omniscient Guru understood the challenges of the spiritual path, where few genuinely seek higher knowledge. He did not want his disciple to be discouraged by small audiences.

Indeed, his words proved prophetic. At Swami Chinmayananda's first Jnana Yagna in Poona, only four people attended. On December 23, 1951, Swamiji delivered his first lecture in Pune—marking the humble yet historic beginning of a spiritual movement that would later inspire millions.

## Spiritual Renaissance

After receiving the permission and wholehearted blessings of his Guru, Swami Tapovan Ji Maharaj, Swami Chinmayananda descended from the serene heights of the Himalayas with a sacred resolve—to bring the timeless wisdom of the Sanatan Rishis to his fellow countrymen and women. India had recently gained political independence, yet there was an urgent need for a deeper awakening. The nation, though free outwardly, was drifting away from the philosophical foundations of Vedanta that had sustained its spiritual and moral strength for centuries.

His primary objective was clear and bold: **“to convert Hindus to Hinduism.”**

This mission was far from easy. From the very outset, Swamiji encountered intense opposition. In those days, the study of Sanatan scriptures was largely restricted to a small section of society. It was regarded as sacred knowledge reserved exclusively for the learned Brahmin class. When Swami Chinmayananda began openly teaching the scriptures to the general public, it shocked the traditional custodians of this knowledge.

The so-called guardians of scriptural wisdom were outraged that a young and dynamic monk was taking what they considered “secret teachings” into the streets through public discourses. Moreover, he delivered these teachings in English—the language of the former rulers. Many branded him a rebel and even declared that divine punishment would follow such sacrilege.

The resistance did not come only from conservative quarters. The English-educated elite also showed little enthusiasm for his call to revive spiritual culture. Influenced by Western materialism and skepticism, many among them were disconnected from the traditional Aryan spiritual heritage of Hinduism.

Yet Swamiji remained undeterred. He firmly believed that success was a birthright and demonstrated this conviction through his life. With unwavering confidence, he knew that, in time, he would win the hearts and minds of the nation.

Traveling tirelessly across India, he emphasized that national progress must be rooted in higher spiritual ideals. He demonstrated through reason and example that spirituality was not a barrier to development; rather, it enriched life and gave it deeper meaning.

For 42 years, despite fragile health, Swamiji labored without rest—traveling across India and around the globe, rarely taking a break. He often remarked, **“When I rest, I rust.”**

His radiant presence brought inspiration wherever he went. Approachable and compassionate, he patiently resolved doubts, soothed anxieties, and guided seekers during satsangs and discussions worldwide. Whether addressing a child, a scholar, or a political leader, he gave equal time and attention to sincere seekers. Ever punctual, enthusiastic, and tireless, he never failed to keep an appointment—even when ill.

Swamiji’s style of teaching was distinctive—modern, logical, vibrant, and occasionally provocative. He interpreted ancient scriptures using scientific reasoning, combined with dynamism and humor, making them accessible and appealing to the modern youth. His luminous smile and powerful voice soon attracted audiences that grew from dozens to hundreds, and eventually to thousands.

At his discourses, he insisted that participants bring their own copies of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita and actively join in chanting the Sanskrit verses.

Beyond lectures, Swami Chinmayananda authored commentaries on major Vedantic texts. His writings covered various dimensions

of religion and spirituality, including literature for children. With clarity, simplicity, and scientific logic, he made profound scriptural truths understandable to the masses, illustrating them with practical examples drawn from daily life. Written in modern language, his works addressed the needs of contemporary society while preserving scriptural authenticity.

Once, a child innocently asked him, “Swami Ji, where do you live?”

He replied with a smile, “At the airports and the train stations.”

It was indeed true. This great saint owned nothing and had no permanent residence. Until his Mahasamadhi, he never stayed in one place for more than a week. He would arrive with the greeting “Hari Om” and depart with the same sacred words. From one city to another, he carried with him the love of countless hearts whom he had inspired to live a Vedantic life grounded in knowledge and noble values.

He would often say, **“Vedanta makes you a better Hindu, a better Christian, a better Muslim, because it makes you a better human being.”**

## Chinmaya Mission

On August 8, 1953, Swamiji formally established the **Chinmaya Mission** in India with the support of dedicated devotees. Under his visionary leadership, the Mission became the nucleus of a spiritual renaissance movement encompassing wide-ranging spiritual, educational, and charitable activities. It uplifted and ennobled thousands of lives in India and across the world.

The Mission follows the ancient Vedic teacher-student tradition (Guru-Shishya Parampara) and makes the ageless wisdom of Advaita Vedanta—the knowledge of universal oneness—accessible to all. It provides practical tools to internalize and live this wisdom.

Vedanta, the essential core of Hinduism, is presented as a universal science of life relevant to people of all backgrounds and faiths. While the Mission is rooted in Hindu tradition, it does not seek to convert followers of other religions. Rather, it encourages seekers to better understand and deepen their own faith.

As a spiritual movement dedicated to inner growth—both individual and collective—the Mission offers numerous Vedanta study forums for all age groups. It promotes Indian classical arts and carries out extensive social service initiatives. Millions worldwide have directly or indirectly benefited from its centres, ashrams, classes, events, and service projects.

By 1976, when Swami Chinmayananda turned 60, his contributions to Vedantic scholarship were recognized throughout India. The Chinmaya Movement had spread to every corner of the nation. It was then that he expanded its reach internationally, delivering discourses abroad and establishing Mission centres worldwide.

The Mission's motto became: **“Maximum happiness to the maximum number for the maximum time.”**

Understanding that lectures and books alone could not transform lives, Swamiji introduced weekly study groups. These gatherings enabled seekers to reinforce and assimilate teachings through collective reflection and discussion.

He gave special love and attention to children, seeing them as the architects of the future. He founded **Bala Vihar** and **Yuva Kendra**—youth forums designed to instill the principles of Hindu culture and spirituality. These classes helped young minds unfold their latent potential under the light of dynamic spirituality. Many participants grew into successful, cultured members of society. Swamiji often said that living by his teachings was the best Guru Dakshina, one could offer him.

Today, Chinmaya Mission sponsors more than 62 schools in India, where students receive standard academic education along with exposure to Vedic heritage. It also runs nursing and management institutions for higher education. The dissemination of Vedantic knowledge continues through the publication and global distribution of Swamiji's books.

To ensure the systematic transmission of Vedantic wisdom, Swamiji established ashrams in India and abroad. These centers train Brahmacharis and Swamis according to the Sanatan Gurukula tradition.

Moved by compassion for the poor, sick, and elderly, he also initiated free clinics, hospitals, vocational “Hari Har” schools, orphanages, and homes for the aged—expressions of spirituality in action and service.

## **Chinmaya Mission Pledge**

*We stand as one family, bound to each other with love and respect.*

*We serve as an army, courageous and disciplined, ever ready to fight against all low tendencies and false values, within and without us.*

*We live honestly the noble life of sacrifice and service, producing more than what we consume and giving more than what we take.*

*We seek the Lord's grace to keep us on the path of virtue, courage, and wisdom.*

*May thy grace and blessings flow through us to the world around us.*

*We believe that the service of our country is the service of the Lord of Lords, and devotion to the people is devotion to the supreme Self.*

*We know our responsibilities.*

*Give us the ability and courage to fulfill them.*

*Om Tat Sat.*

## The Three Principles Taught by Swami Chinmayananda

Swamiji often emphasized that to realize our true spiritual nature is to experience the fullness and completeness of life. Until this realization dawns, the intellect constantly proposes methods to overcome our sense of incompleteness. These methods manifest as desires. Desires, he explained, are nothing but expressions of ignorance regarding our real nature.

This ignorance causes us to identify ourselves with the body, mind, and intellect, leading to an egocentric life filled with pain and limitation. Therefore, there is no achievement more sacred and glorious than realizing our true identity with the limitless, Eternal Self.

Religion, according to Swamiji, exists to remove this ignorance through spiritual disciplines. Ignorance, appearing first as desires on the mental plane, extends outward into action in the world. Hence, spiritual masters advise that the most practical way to overcome ignorance is by regulating and purifying our actions.

All religions uphold virtues such as goodness, kindness, tolerance, compassion, and selflessness. They insist upon moral and ethical refinement as the essential foundation for spiritual evolution. Without cultivating these virtues, even a lifetime of worship and devotion may fall short of its goal.

Swamiji beautifully summarized that the temple of Hinduism rests upon three fundamental pillars: **self-control, non-injury, and truthfulness**. The vast spiritual literature of India is, in essence, an elaboration and exposition of these three principles. Ancient India structured its individual, social, and national life around these foundational duties.

When practiced sincerely, these values lead to mastery over the mind, which in turn results in mastery over oneself and the surrounding world. Although expressed differently across religions to suit particular times and contexts, the essence of these principles remains universal.

These three ethical disciplines are:

- **Self-control (Brahmacharya)**
- **Non-injury (Ahimsa)**
- **Truthfulness (Satyam)**

They correspond respectively to the physical, emotional, and intellectual dimensions of human personality.

### **Self-Control (Brahmacharya)**

The physical body naturally seeks contact with the external world for sense gratification. The eyes desire beautiful forms, the tongue craves delicious tastes, the nose seeks pleasant fragrances, and so on. However, when life becomes centered solely on fulfilling sensory demands, passions multiply and eventually overpower us.

To prevent such decline, discipline at the physical level—Brahmacharya—is prescribed. Swamiji clarified that the term Brahmacharya has often been misunderstood. It does not imply total denial of sensory experiences, but rather intelligent and moderate interaction with the world. Excess in any activity—whether reading, watching television, talking, walking, or even eating slightly more than necessary—constitutes a violation of this discipline.

By living in self-control, one discovers renewed vitality and inner strength, becoming a stabilizing force in society. Neglecting this sacred principle leads to the loss of freedom and enslavement to

ever-changing external circumstances. Thus, Brahmacharya is a value to be practiced at the physical level with awareness and moderation.

### **Non-Injury (Ahimsa)**

At the mental level, the discipline prescribed is Ahimsa. Swamiji emphasized that Ahimsa is not merely the absence of physical violence. It is fundamentally a mental attitude governing our motives and intentions toward others.

Non-injury means that our motives must be free from hatred, cruelty, or ill will. Sometimes, actions may outwardly appear harsh, yet be rooted in compassion. As Shakespeare expressed in *Hamlet*, “I am cruel only to be kind.” A surgeon performing a painful operation does so out of a benevolent motive. Though pain is inflicted, the intention is healing. Such action is consistent with Ahimsa.

Ahimsa is not passive weakness. Restraining the wicked to protect the good is a righteous duty. True non-injury lies in the purity of intention. In cultivating a beautiful garden, one must remove thorny weeds; similarly, in fulfilling a noble motive, firmness may sometimes be required.

Thus, Ahimsa is a discipline to be applied primarily at the level of motive.

### **Truthfulness (Satyam)**

Truthfulness governs the intellectual dimension of life. The outer world acts as a vast university, offering countless experiences for learning. When these experiences are carefully reflected upon and the intellect reaches a firm conviction, honesty demands that we act in alignment with that conviction.

If we fail to exercise the mind and intellect properly, they lose clarity and strength. Religion constantly urges us to “be truthful to our previously gained wisdom.” This means living according to our highest understanding.

Though we may cherish noble ideals, we often compromise under pressure from our senses. Such compromise is a form of dishonesty. True dignity lies in living consistently with one’s convictions at all times.

The entire structure of life rests upon these three enduring principles. By practicing them, we integrate our physical, emotional, and intellectual dimensions, achieving inner harmony and strength. Through this integration alone can we truly enjoy life and develop the courage to face and overcome its challenges.

One who lives with disciplined self-control, practices non-injury in intention, remains vigilant in learning from life’s experiences, and acts truthfully in accordance with conviction becomes spiritually elevated. Such individuals rise naturally to the highest stages of human evolution.

Though only a few in society embody these ideals fully, those few attain such stature that they guide the world with irresistible spiritual power. These heroic personalities—whose head and heart are harmoniously integrated—continue to lead humanity toward ever higher levels of spiritual growth.

## **Achievements**

Wikipedia lists the achievements of Swami Chinmayananda Saraswati Ji as follows.

### **Chinmaya Mission**

Swami Chinmayananda Ji established ashrams in India and across the world as centers for spiritual retreat, study, and practice.

Chinmaya Mission continues to administer and conduct numerous devotional, spiritual, cultural, and social initiatives in Swami Chinmayananda's memory, including the "Bala Vihar," the "Chinmaya Yuva Kendra" (the global youth wing of Chinmaya Mission), and Chinmaya study groups for adults, also known as "Devi Groups." The Mission has also constructed over 58 temples in India and abroad. It operates the "Chinmaya Organisation for Rural Development (CORD)," founded by Swami Chinmayananda Ji himself, to facilitate integrated and sustainable development for the poor through self-empowerment.

### **Chinmaya International Foundation**

Swami Ji established the "Chinmaya International Foundation" at the Tharavad house of Adi Shankara. The foundation acquired this place in the village of Veliyanad in Ernakulam District, Kerala.

### **Nursery Schools**

From its beginnings in 1965—when the first nursery school was inaugurated by Swami Chinmayananda Ji in Kollengode, Kerala (India)—there are today over 76 "Chinmaya Vidyalayas (Schools)," seven "Chinmaya Colleges," and the "Chinmaya International Residential School" in India, as well as the first "Chinmaya Vidyalaya" outside India in Trinidad, West Indies.

## **Medical Facilities**

Swami Chinmayananda Ji inaugurated the first Chinmaya Mission Hospital in 1970. This facility has since grown into a modern, fully equipped 200-bed hospital in Bangalore, Karnataka, India.

In the late 1970s, Swami Chinmayananda Ji also established rural health care services in Sidhbari, Himachal Pradesh, India.

## **Publications**

Swami Chinmayananda Ji authored 95 publications in his lifetime, including forty commentaries on classical scriptural texts, eight compilations, 13 co-authored works, and 34 original works. Over the years, many luxury hotels in India began keeping a copy of his Bhagavad Gita commentary in their guest rooms. His books, written in English, have been translated into numerous regional Indian languages including Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Marathi, Telugu, Kannada, Odia, Bengali, Sindhi, and Urdu, and also into various European languages such as French and Spanish. His birth centenary has been commemorated with the publication of the “Chinmaya Birth Centenary Series.”

## **BMI Chart**

The “BMI (Body Mind Intellect) Chart” is a teaching tool innovated by Swami Chinmayananda Ji and became one of his hallmarks. It categorizes the totality of human experience according to the science of Vedanta by drawing on 11 characters of the English and Devanagari alphabets.

## **Establishment of Vishva Hindu Parishad**

Swami Chinmayananda Ji, along with other Sanatan saints, established the “Vishva Hindu Parishad” in 1964 and became one

of its founding members. The decision to form the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) was taken at a meeting held at Sandipani Sadhanalaya, Bombay, on Janmashtami day in 1964. The meeting was attended by important dignitaries, saints, and social workers. Along with declaring the aims and objectives of the Parishad, the gathering also decided the organizational pattern and the membership structure. It was further resolved that the word “Hindu” was defined to include all ethical and spiritual principles of life that have sprung up in Bharat.

The meeting also decided that the Parishad would have an Advisory Council consisting of (a) the Acharyas and Gurus of the various sects and sampradayas of the faith, (b) saints, and (c) reputed thinkers, philosophers, and guides of the tradition.

The meeting nominated Swami Chinmayanand as the first Acting President of the Parishad, Shri S. S. Apte as the General Secretary, and Shri Lalchand Hirachand and Shri M. N. Ghatate as Treasurers.

In a meeting held at Prayag on 21 January 1966, it was decided to draft the constitution of the Parishad. A committee of six persons—Shri Ramaprasad Mukherjee, Shri C. B. Agarwal, Swami Chinmayananda Ji, Shri Ramchandra Rao, Shri Hardatta Rai Sun gla, and Shri S. S. Apte—was appointed for this purpose.

The stated objective of the VHP was to organize and consolidate Hindu society and to serve and protect Hindu Dharma. The VHP has been involved in social service projects and has encouraged the construction and renovation of Hindu temples. It is against the caste system and opposes cow slaughter. Defending Hindus worldwide and protecting Hindu rights have been stated objectives. The VHP considers Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, and native tribal religions as part of the broader Hindu fraternity.

The VHP also promotes education and involvement among members of the Hindu diaspora in their cultural duties and spiritual values. This view was strongly promoted by Swami Chinmayananda Ji and is reflected in the spread of the VHP across the world.

### **Honours and Recognitions**

Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi Ji addressed the audience at the release of a commemorative coin to mark the birth centenary of Swami Chinmayananda in New Delhi on 8 May 2015.

On 2 December 1992, Swami Chinmayananda Ji addressed the United Nations; the talk was titled “Planet in Crisis.”

In 1992, Swami Chinmayananda gave an address at the United Nations titled “Planet in Crisis.” Just before his Mahasamadhi, Swamiji was recognized as a world-renowned teacher of Vedanta and a Hindu religious leader. He was selected as the President of the Hindu religion for the Centennial Conference of the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago, where Swami Vivekananda Ji had delivered his address a hundred years earlier. He was also honoured in Washington, D.C., at “World Vision 2000,” a conference of religious leaders sponsored by Hindu Vishwa Parishad on 6–8 August 1993. The award was to be presented to Swami Ji for his selfless service to humanity and for his extraordinary achievement in creating a renaissance of spiritual and cultural values in the land of his birth, India.

The U.S. magazine *Hinduism Today* conferred upon him its “Hindu Renaissance Award” and the title of “Hindu of the Year” in 1992.

## **Mahasamadhi**

Swami Chinmayananda Ji, unfortunately, suffered from several health ailments during the later years of his life, including diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. His first heart attack occurred in 1969, and he was treated at the newly established Chinmaya Mission Hospital in Bangalore, becoming its very first patient. In the summer of 1980, while he was in the United States conducting a series of Gyan Yajnas, he had to undergo multiple heart bypass surgeries in Texas.

On 26 July 1993, while staying at a devotee's residence in San Diego, California, Swamiji developed severe breathing difficulties. He was immediately taken to Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla and later transferred to Sharp Memorial Hospital. There, on 29 July, he underwent a quintuple bypass surgery. Despite the efforts of the medical team, his condition remained critical, and he was placed on a life-support system.

Five days later, at 5:45 pm on 3 August 1993, Swami Chinmayananda Ji attained Mahasamadhi at the age of 77. His devotees and followers commemorate this day each year as Mahasamadhi Day.

On 7 August 1993, thousands of devotees gathered at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi to receive his mortal remains when they were brought back to India. His body was then transported to Sidhbari in Himachal Pradesh, where it was laid to rest in accordance with Vedic rituals. A Mahasamadhi shrine has since been built there in his sacred memory.

## **SAINT SHRI NARSI BHAGAT – A GREAT DEVOTEE OF LORD KRISHNA**



## Introduction

We are all familiar with the beloved Bhajan cherished by Babu Mahatma Gandhi:

‘Vaishnava jana to tene kahiye, je peed paraayi jaane re, .....’.

This renowned Bhajan was composed by the great devotee of Lord Krishna, the 15th-century saint Shri Narsinh Mehta, popularly known as Shri Narsi Bhagat. To the followers of Sanatan Dharma, Shri Narsi Bhagat requires little introduction. Responding to the spiritual awakening of the Bhakti Movement of the 14th and 15th centuries—initiated by Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Acharya Ji—Shri Narsi Bhagat composed more than 700 Bhajans in praise of Lord Krishna. His devotional songs captivated the hearts of people through the depth of his love, unwavering faith in Lord Krishna, and the simplicity of his expression.

Shri Narsi Mehta was a contemporary of another illustrious devotee of Lord Krishna, Bhakta Mira Bai of Chittor, Rajasthan, who was a disciple of Saint Raidas of the Shri Ramanandi Sampraday. Although there is no clear evidence that Shri Narsi Bhagat formally joined the Ramanandi Sampraday, he embraced the same spiritual principles associated with the Shri Sampraday. One such principle was, “Hari Ko Bhaje, So Hari Ko Hoi.” He rejected all discrimination based on religion, caste, social status, or gender among devotees. His Bhajans clearly convey that a true Vaishnava is one who rises above such divisions. According to his teachings, human life is wasted when people distance themselves from others on the basis of caste or social differences.

Shri Narsi Bhagat maintained a **Sakhaa (friendship) Bhav** with the Lord. He addressed Lord Krishna as a friend, with loving familiarity and equality. A simple-hearted Bhakta, he perceived Lord Krishna everywhere and in everything. Through his

unwavering devotion, he demonstrated that when one prays with sincerity, faith, and a pure heart, the Lord Himself is compelled to appear and remove the devotee's obstacles. Many miracles occurred in the life of Shri Narsi Bhagat, and he experienced the physical Darshan of Lord Krishna on several occasions. One such instance is described below.

Once, while travelling with his elder brother Bansidhar to a distant place, they found themselves unable to obtain any food along the way and became extremely hungry. Shri Narsi Bhagat prayed earnestly to Lord Krishna for food for himself and his brother. Soon, Lord Krishna appeared in the form of a shepherd boy. The boy invited them to his small cottage and graciously offered them food.

However, his brother refused to accept the food, as it was offered by someone whom he believed to belong to a lower caste shepherd community. Shri Narsi Bhagat gently urged his brother to partake of the meal, explaining that it was Lord Krishna Himself who was serving them. Yet his brother lacked such faith. Shri Narsi Bhagat ate the food with gratitude and satisfaction, and afterwards they resumed their journey.

After walking only a short distance, his brother suddenly realized that he had forgotten his water vessel in the cottage. He returned to retrieve it. To his astonishment, he found that neither the cottage nor the shepherd boy existed there anymore. Only his water vessel lay on the ground.

This incident was the divine grace of Lord Krishna, who had personally served His devotee, fulfilling His promise described in the Gita:

**अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।  
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥**

**Ananyāsh chintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate.  
Teṣhām nityābhiyuktānām yoga-kṣhemām vahāmyaham.**

There are those who always think of Me and engage in exclusive devotion to Me. To them, whose minds are always absorbed in Me, I provide what they lack and preserve what they already possess.

Shri Narsi Bhagat is revered as the ‘**Adi Kavi**’ of Gujarat, the pioneering poet who not only shaped the Gujarati poetic tradition but elevated it to the highest levels of musical and philosophical expression. Much of what he composed—poetry, songs, Bhajans, and verses—became widely celebrated and deeply embedded in the popular consciousness of the people. For centuries, his literary creations have resonated throughout the Saurashtra region, passing from generation to generation as a treasured cultural inheritance. He was not only an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna but also a courageous social reformer.

This narrative is a humble attempt to present a few words about this great saint. It is said that the Lord Himself is pleased when the glories of His devotees are sung. The Lord has declared:

**मैं तो हूँ भक्तों का दास, भगत मेरे मुकुट मणि ।**

**Main To Hoon Bhakton Kaa Das, Bhagat Mere Mukut Mani.**

I look after my devotees. My devotees are the jewel in the crown.

## Birth and Parents

According to a poem composed by Saint Shri Narsi Mehta himself, he was born in the village of Telaja in the Bhavnagar district of the present-day Gujarat State of India in the year 1414 AD.

गाम तेलजा जन्म मारो थायो ।

**Gaam Telaja Janm Maaro Thayo.**

I was born in the village Telaja.

There have been several differing accounts regarding the exact date of birth of Saint Shri Narsi Mehta. However, most historians agree that he was born on the **Shashti day of Krishnapaksha in the month of Paus of Vikram Samwat 1471 (1414 AD)**. According to historical records, a few years after his birth the family moved to Junagarh, as his elder brother Bansidhar obtained employment there as a senior police officer (Thanedar).

His father, Shri Krishna Damodar Das, and his mother, Shrimati Lakshmi Gauri, belonged to the respected Nagar Brahmin community of Gujarat. As mentioned earlier, Shri Narsi Mehta had an elder brother named Shri Bansidhar.

When Shri Narsi Mehta was only five years old, tragedy struck the family—both of his parents passed away. The young child was thereafter raised with great affection and care by his grandmother, Shrimati Jaykunwari, and by his elder brother Bansidhar, who was nearly twenty-two years older than him.

Shri Narsi Mehta was born mute and was unable to speak a single word until he was eight years old. His grandmother was deeply distressed by his condition and constantly prayed to Lord Shiva for the welfare of her grandson. She possessed unwavering faith that

the Lord would one day listen to her prayers. She firmly believed that the surest way to please the Lord was through devotion and by serving His devotees.

Whenever she heard that a saint or hermit had arrived in the town, she would go to meet him and serve him with sincere devotion. At last, the Lord responded to her heartfelt prayers.

One beautiful day in the month of **Phalgun, Suklapaksha Panchami of 1419 AD**, a grand festival in honor of Hatkeshwar Mahadev was being celebrated in the town. A large crowd had gathered at the Hatkeshwar Mahadev temple. Shrimati Jaykunwari also went to the temple with her grandson Narsi to offer prayers.

After offering milk and flowers to the Lord, she noticed a hermit seated quietly in one corner of the temple, chanting “Narayan, Narayan.” His face shone with divine radiance, and he appeared to be a great seer endowed with extraordinary spiritual power.

She approached him with deep reverence and bowed at his feet, placing her grandson before him. With folded hands, tears in her eyes, she humbly said:

“O great Saint, this boy is my grandson. His name is Narsi. Unfortunately, his parents passed away when he was only five years old. He is now nearly eight years old but cannot speak even a single word. Everyone in the village calls him ‘dumb,’ and this pierces my heart with sorrow. I pray to you, O revered Saint, please bless him so that he may speak.”

Saying this, she fell at the feet of the saint.

The heart of a saint is tender like butter. Goswami Tulsidas Ji has beautifully expressed this sentiment.

संत हृदय नवनीत समाना । कहा कविन पै कहहि न जाना ॥  
निज परताप द्रवइ नवनीता । संत द्रवहि परताप पुनीता ॥

**Sant Hirday Navnit Samaanaa.**  
**Kahaa Kavin Pai Kahahi Na Jaanaa.**  
**Nij Partaap Drawai Navneetaa.**  
**Sant Dravahi Partaap Puneetaa.**

The poets have described the heart of a Saint like butter. However, in my (Goswami Tulsidas) opinion, they have not described this very well. Butter only melts when heat is applied, but the heart of a Saint melts on listening the troubles of others.

Moved by compassion, the saint lifted the boy Narsi onto his lap and said gently, “Do not grieve, revered lady. This child will one day become a great devotee of the Lord.”

He then asked the boy to repeat after him the words, “Radhe Krishna, Radhe Krishna.”

At that very moment, a miracle occurred. The mute child began chanting, “Radhe Krishna, Radhe Krishna.”

One can easily imagine the immense joy of grandmother Shrimati Jaykunwari when she heard her once-mute grandson chanting the sacred name of the Lord. Overwhelmed with gratitude, she fell at the feet of the great seer and invited him to her home for a meal.

The saint politely declined her invitation but blessed her with these words:

“O mother, I do not possess any supernatural powers. This has happened solely by the grace of the Lord. Now return home and continue chanting His sacred name. The Lord will always bless you and your family. I generally do not visit the homes of

householders. I am on my way to Kailash Parvat. I also tell you that when the time comes, this boy will be married to a great devotee of the Lord.”

Having spoken these words, the mysterious seer disappeared into the crowd.

Shrimati Jaykunwari returned home with her grandson Narsi, who could now speak. She narrated the entire incident to her elder son Bansidhar. Being the senior police officer of the region, Bansidhar wished to meet the saint himself and receive his blessings. He ordered his subordinate officers to search everywhere for the great seer, but no one was able to find him.

Many believed that perhaps **Lord Shiva Himself had appeared in the form of that saint to bless the young Narsi.**

## Education, Marriage and Family

After young Narsi regained his speech through the blessings of the mysterious saint, his elder brother Bansidhar enrolled him in a Sanskrit school (Vidyalaya) for formal education. However, Narsi showed little interest in conventional studies.

Instead of concentrating on the school curriculum, he would sit quietly in a corner of the classroom and continuously chant the sacred name “Radhe Krishna.” He frequently visited the nearby temple of Lord Krishna early in the morning and would sit before the idol of the Lord, absorbed in chanting His holy name.

Eventually, the teacher became frustrated with this unusual behavior and requested Bansidhar to take the boy back home. Left with no alternative, Bansidhar brought Narsi back home. He scolded the young boy for neglecting his studies, but his words had little effect.

In an attempt to discipline him, Bansidhar assigned him strenuous tasks such as caring for the horses and cutting grass in the fields. Yet, to his surprise, Narsi performed these tasks cheerfully. While working, he continued chanting and singing the glories of the Lord.

At times, he would become so immersed in devotion to Lord Krishna that he would begin dancing while singing the Lord’s praises.

Bansidhar was deeply disappointed and wondered how his younger brother would ever take responsibility for worldly life. Believing that marriage might bring maturity and a sense of duty, he arranged Narsi’s marriage with a beautiful girl named Manik Gauri from the same community.

Manik Gauri, too, had been a devoted worshipper of Lord Krishna since childhood. After their marriage, husband and wife together sang the glories of the Lord, paying little attention to worldly matters.

When Narsi was sixteen years old, he was blessed with a daughter, whom he named Kunwar Bai. A couple of years later, a son was born to him, and he named the child Shamal Das.

## Family Hardships and Trials

Unfortunately, Shri Narsi's sister-in-law (Bhabhi), Durit Gauri, could not become a mother. Because of this, she grew increasingly jealous of Manik Gauri, the wife of Narsi. As Narsi was not formally educated, he was unable to secure a respectable occupation to earn a livelihood. Consequently, he and his family were dependent on his elder brother Bansidhar for their sustenance.

This dependence provided Durit Gauri with an opportunity to constantly taunt and harass them. Narsi and his wife Manik Gauri performed all the laborious household tasks as instructed by Durit Gauri, yet she was never satisfied. She frequently insulted and scolded them. Although Bansidhar clearly understood the harsh behavior and ill intentions of his wife, he did not have the courage to openly oppose her.

Time passed in this manner. Kunwar Bai, the daughter of Narsi and Manik Gauri, had now reached the age of ten. Their grandmother Jaykunwari had grown very old and was now ninety-five years of age. She witnessed the cruelty inflicted upon the young couple by Durit Gauri, but what could a frail old woman, lying on her deathbed, possibly do?

One thought troubled her deeply. If she were to leave this world before the marriage of Kunwar Bai, Durit Gauri might prevent her beloved granddaughter from being married into a respectable family. With this concern in mind, she called her son Bansidhar to her bedside and requested him to arrange the marriage of Kunwar Bai in a good family. In those days, child marriage was common.

Bansidhar promised his mother that he would fulfill her wish. He immediately sent the family Purohit to search for a suitable groom. The Purohit soon found a worthy match in Shri Vasant Rai, the son

of Shri Rangdhar Mehta of the village Una in the Kathiawar district of Gujarat. The marriage was arranged and celebrated with great joy and grandeur. Grandmother Shrimati Jaykunwari spent all her savings on the wedding.

With her cherished wish fulfilled, Shrimati Jaykunwari peacefully departed for the heavenly abode three months after the marriage.

Even after the marriage of his daughter, Narsi continued to serve his elder brother and sister-in-law in humble tasks such as tending the horses and cutting grass. His wife Manik Gauri continued to carry out all the household duties.

Whenever Narsi found a little time away from his work, he would pray to Lord Krishna and attend Sadhu Satsang. Despite working tirelessly day and night without any reward, his Bhabhi remained dissatisfied and constantly found excuses to scold them.

Narsi lived in great fear of his sister-in-law and tried constantly to please her. In fact, he would usually return home from the fields only when his elder brother had already returned from his duties. Bansidhar, in truth, still had affection for his younger brother. In his presence, Durit Gauri restrained herself from scolding Narsi and Manik Gauri. However, whenever Bansidhar was away on official work for several days, those were the most difficult times for the couple. During those periods, Durit Gauri would torment them without restraint.

At such times, Narsi would console his wife by reciting a verse from the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita.

**दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।  
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥**

**Duḥkheṣvanudvignamanāḥ Sukheṣu Vigatasprhaḥ.  
Vītarāgabhayakrodhaḥ Sthitadhīrmunirucyate.**

He whose mind is undisturbed in the midst of sorrows and amid pleasures is free from desire, from whom liking and fear and wrath have passed away, is the sage of settled understanding.

Narsi and his wife lived as true embodiments of this teaching of Lord Krishna. They patiently endured all insults and hardships without complaint.

One day, when Bansidhar had gone away on official duty, Narsi went early in the morning to cut grass for the horses. That day he had not even taken his breakfast. The day was extremely hot, and it took him a long time to gather enough grass for the horses.

When he returned home in the afternoon, exhausted and hungry, he requested his Bhabhi to give him some food. Instead of offering him food, Durit Gauri began shouting at him and hurling harsh abuses.

She angrily said, “Look at this fraud who pretends to be a devotee of the Lord! Instead of cutting grass for the horses, he must have been enjoying the day with his so-called saintly friends. His brother Bansidhar works hard all day, and I manage the entire household. Yet this husband and wife, along with their son, remain a burden upon us. How long must we keep feeding such useless people?”

These harsh words deeply wounded Narsi. Unable to endure the insults any longer, he prayed to the Lord to protect his wife and son and quietly left the house.

At that moment, his wife Manik Gauri had gone out to collect flowers for worship. When she returned home and learned that her husband had departed, she searched for him anxiously throughout

the town, but she could not find him anywhere. She wished to leave the house and follow him, yet she had a young son to care for and no place to go. With a heavy heart, she remained at home, praying to the Lord for the safety of her husband and hoping that he would soon return.

When Bansidhar returned the next day from his official tour, he was greatly saddened to hear that his younger brother had left home. He made every possible effort to search for Narsi, but despite all attempts, he could not locate him.

## Blessings of Lord Shiva

Having left his brother's house and with nowhere to go, Narsi wandered toward the forest while continuously chanting the holy name of the Lord. He himself did not know where his steps were taking him. After wandering for some time, he reached a deserted and dilapidated temple of Lord Shiva.

The sun was setting, and night was approaching. Narsi had neither eaten nor drunk water for a long time. As soon as he entered the temple, exhaustion overcame him and he lost consciousness. When he regained consciousness in the middle of the night, he realized that he was lying upon a Shivalinga.

Calm and fearless, he resumed chanting the sacred name of the Lord. In this manner, seven days passed. Pleased with his intense devotion, Lord Shiva appeared before him on the seventh day.

Lord Shiva blessed him and said, "O my son, I am greatly pleased with your devotion. Ask for any boon you desire."

Narsi bowed before the Lord and replied with humility, "O Lord, I do not desire any boon, but I cannot disobey Your command either. Therefore, please grant me whatever You Yourself consider most dear."

He expressed this sentiment in his poem as follows.

**तमने जे वल्लभ होए दुर्लभ,  
आपो रे प्रभु जी मुने दया रे आनी ।**

**Tamane Je Vallabh Hoe Durlabh,  
Apo Re Prabhu Ji Mune Dayaa Re Ani.**

Lord Shiva immediately understood that Narsi desired the Darshan of Lord Krishna. Therefore, He took him to the divine abode of Lord Krishna.

When Lord Shiva arrived in Saket Dham with Narsi, Lord Krishna was presiding over a great Dharm Sabha. Seated upon a magnificent gold-studded throne with Goddess Rukmini beside Him, Lord Krishna was surrounded by His ministers and companions, including Maharaj Ugrasen, Balram, Akroor, Uddhav, Vidura, and Arjun.

As soon as Lord Krishna and the assembled dignitaries saw Lord Shiva entering the assembly, they immediately rose from their seats and welcomed Him with reverence. Saint Raidas has described this divine gathering in the following words.

**धर्मसभा मा जहां उग्रसेन तहां, संकर्षणद जी संग बैठा ।  
तहां वासुदेव ने देवकीनंदन, राजराजेश्वर कृष्णा बैठा ॥**

**DharmSabha Ma Jahan Ugrasen Tahan,  
Sankarshand Ji Sang Betha.  
Tahaan Vasudev ne Devakeenandan,  
Raajraajeshwar Krishna Baitha.**

Lord Krishna offered Lord Shiva a divine seat and stood before Him with folded hands.

Lord Shiva then spoke, "O Lord of the Universe, I present before You this Brahmin boy named Narsi. For seven days he prayed upon the Shivalinga without food or water. Pleased by his devotion, I appeared before him and offered him a boon. He requested that I grant him whatever I consider most dear. You know well that You are my Isht, the one most dear to me. Therefore, I have brought him to You so that You may bless him."

Hearing these loving words from Lord Shiva, who is most dear to Him, Lord Krishna turned His compassionate gaze toward the young devotee Narsi and placed His hand upon his head in blessing.

Narsi immediately fell at the Lord's feet. Tears streamed from his eyes as he washed the sacred feet of the Lord with his tears.

Lord Krishna then spoke kindly to him, "O child, there is no difference between Me and Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva is My Isht Dev, and as he has said, I am his Isht Dev. Your worship of Lord Shiva is the same as worship of Me. Now remain fearless and always remember Me. I will always take care of you—this is My promise."

After introducing Narsi to Lord Krishna, Lord Shiva returned to Kailash. Lord Krishna then took Narsi to His palace, where Narsi stayed for some time.

Soon the sacred day of Sharad Poornima arrived, the occasion when Lord Krishna celebrates the divine Raas Leela with His queens, Gopis, and companions. Lord Krishna invited Narsi to participate in the Raas Leela.

Overwhelmed with devotion while singing the glories of the Lord, Narsi became completely absorbed in divine ecstasy. He began dancing with the Gopis and forgot all awareness of himself.

He described this divine experience in his poetry as follows.

**शरद पूनम तनो दिवस तहां आवीयो, रास मज्ञादनो वेन वाध्यो ।  
नरसहिये तहां ताल साध्यो, सखी रूप थयो गति गावा ॥**

**Shard Poonam Tano Divas Tahan Aavio,  
Raas Magyaadano Ven Vaadhyo.**

**Narsahiye Tahan Taal Saadhyo,  
Sakhee Roop Thayo Gati Gaavaa.**

Lord Krishna was deeply pleased by Narsi's devotion and affectionately covered his body with His own **Pitambari**, the divine yellow garment dear to Him.

**प्रेमे पीताम्बर आपीयूं श्री हरी,  
रीझिया कृष्ण जी ताल वाहातां ।**

**Preme Pitaambar Aapeeyoon Shree Hari,  
Reejhiyaa Krishna Ji Taal Vaahaataan.**

Then Lord Krishna placed a lighted earthen lamp in the hand of Narsi. Absorbed completely in divine ecstasy, Narsi continued singing and dancing with the burning lamp in his hand. In the intensity of his devotion, he became utterly unaware of his body. The flame of the lamp gradually spread to his arm and began to burn his clothes as well. When Lord Krishna saw this, He immediately extinguished the fire and lovingly applied a soothing ointment to the burn. Instantly, the wound was healed. Everyone present was astonished to witness the depth of Narsi's absorption in devotion. Mother Rukmani was so deeply moved that She removed Her own gem-studded ornament and placed it around the neck of Narsi.

Lord Krishna then blessed him, saying, "Narsi, you are one of My greatest devotees. Whoever listens to and admires your devotion, I shall regard him or her also as My great devotee."

A few months passed in this divine manner. Narsi was enjoying every moment in Saket Dham. Then one day, Lord Krishna appeared before him and asked him to seek a boon. Standing before the Lord with folded hands, Narsi humbly replied, "O Lord of the Universe, tell me this—if someone has obtained

Chintamani, the wish-fulfilling gem, would he desire anything else? By receiving Your Darshan, I have obtained that very Chintamani. I need nothing more.”

Pleased with his devotion, the Lord then said to Narsi, “O Narsi, let Me instruct you regarding the final aim of human life, which is liberation (Moksh). Every human being born on earth is bound by three debts, and unless these are repaid, the final aim of life cannot be attained. The first debt is toward one’s wife and children. The second debt is toward one’s ancestors. The third debt is toward the Gods and Goddesses. You still have to repay these debts. Therefore, return to your home and fulfill these obligations. Once you become free of these debts, you shall attain liberation. While living at home, continue to chant My name. Whenever you are in any difficulty, simply call upon Me, and I shall be there to help you. Always remember My words:

**अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।  
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥**

**Ananyāśhchintayanto Mām Ye Janāḥ Paryupāsate.  
Teṣhām Nityābhiyuktānām Yoga-Kṣhemam Vahāmyaham.**

There are those who always think of Me and engage in exclusive devotion to Me. To them, whose minds are always absorbed in Me, I provide what they lack and preserve what they already possess.

Obeying the command of Lord Krishna, Narsi decided to return to earth and go back to his home. Lord Krishna gave him His idol and a Kartal, and once again covered his body with His Pitambari.

Lord Krishna then commanded Garud Ji to carry Narsi back to his home on earth. Garud Ji obeyed the divine order and brought Narsi to his hometown, Junagarh, early in the morning, leaving him near a pond. Narsi bathed in the pond, refreshed himself, chanted the

holy name of the Lord, and then began walking toward his house. He was dressed like a Sanyasi, wrapped in the divine Pitambari, with a Kartal in his hand.

At first, his elder brother Banshidhar was overjoyed to see Narsi alive. But when he saw him dressed like a renunciate, his joy quickly turned into anger.

He said sternly, “O foolish man, you are married and have two children. Even though your daughter is married, you still have responsibilities toward your wife and son. Remove this Sanyasi attire immediately and think of supporting your family. If you do not wish to work for me in my house, that is all right—I may find some menial work for you in the kingdom.”

With great humility and folded hands, Narsi replied, “O my brother, you are elder to me and like my parents. You have every right to advise me for my welfare. But this dress and this Kartal have been given to me by the Lord Himself. I cannot renounce them.”

Banshidhar laughed and said, “O foolish Narsi, it seems you must have met some fraud. Since you yourself are simple-minded, it is no surprise that someone deceitful misled you. There is a saying:

**जैसे को तैसा मिला, इसमें कौन नवाइ ।  
मूरख को मूरख मिला, आओ मूरख भाई ॥**

**Jaise Ko Taisa Milaa, Ismein Kaun Navaai.  
Moorakh Ko Moorakh Milaa, Aao Moorakh Bhai.**

Now listen carefully. If you wish to live with us, then remove this Sanyasi dress at once and prepare to do the same work you were doing before.”

At that moment, Bhabhi also joined the conversation and said sharply, “Yes, if you are not prepared to do as your brother says, then leave this house immediately with your wife and son.”

Narsi, with folded hands and full humility, accepted the command of his Bhai and Bhabhi and quietly left the house with his wife and son.

Having nowhere else to go, he took his wife and son to a Dharmshala. The manager of the Dharmshala knew Narsi well and admired him greatly. Out of kindness, he gave him a room free of charge. Although Narsi had now found shelter, he still had no means to provide food for his family. He continued thinking about how he might support them. When he could find no suitable solution, he turned to the Lord in prayer and became absorbed in singing His glories in a sweet and melodious voice.

A traveler, who was also staying at the same Dharmshala, heard the enchanting Bhajan sung by Narsi and was drawn toward him. He appeared to be a wealthy merchant, a Seth. He asked Narsi who he was and why he was staying in the Dharmshala. Narsi narrated his entire story.

The Seth was moved and wished to help him. He politely asked Narsi whether he could be of any service. Narsi humbly replied that he desired nothing for himself, but as a householder he still had the duty to care for his family. If the Seth could arrange a place for his family to stay and some means by which they could live and continue serving saints, that would be all he could ask for.

The Seth then arranged for Narsi and his family to live in a nearby dilapidated temple. He also made all the necessary arrangements to repair the temple and make it suitable for living. In addition, he provided enough food to sustain Narsi’s family for three years and took upon himself the responsibility of feeding all the saints who might visit Narsi.

Narsi was deeply astonished by the generosity of this noble gentleman. With folded hands, he respectfully asked who he truly was.

At last, the Seth revealed his identity. He said, “O Narsi, great devotee of Lord Krishna, Lord Krishna was concerned for your welfare. Therefore, He sent me to earth to make these arrangements for you. My name is Akroor, and as you know, I am a close friend of Lord Krishna. Now live your life in peace. If ever you need anything in the future, simply call upon the Lord—or upon me.”

Having said this, Akroor Ji returned to Saket Dham.

From that time onward, Narsi, now known throughout the region as “Narsi Bhagat,” continued to live a simple and holy life in the repaired temple, serving saints and singing the glories of the Lord. He was a gifted poet, and every day he composed several Bhajans and sang them in a melodious voice. Though he had the blessings of Lord Krishna and the power to obtain whatever he might desire, he accepted only that which was sufficient for the livelihood of his family and for the service of saints. In this way, he lived like a poor man outwardly, yet inwardly he remained completely content and fulfilled.

## Shamal Das, Son of Shri Narsi Bhagat

As mentioned earlier, Shri Narsi Bhagat had two children—a daughter, Kunwar Bai, who had already been married, and a son named Shamal Das. Shamal Das was now twelve years old, which in those days was considered a suitable age for marriage. Manik Gauri, the wife of Shri Narsi Bhagat, had begun to worry about arranging a marriage for her son. Their family was living in poverty, and she wondered who would be willing to give the hand of their daughter to Shamal Das. She expressed her concern to her husband, but as usual, Shri Narsi Bhagat advised her to pray to Lord Krishna, assuring her that the Lord would take care of everything.

At that very time, the daughter of Shri Madan Mehta, named Sursena Bai, had also reached marriageable age. Shri Madan Mehta was a wealthy businessman from Vadnagar. He asked his Purohit to search for a suitable groom for his daughter. After careful consideration, the Purohit informed him that he could not find a worthy match within the Vadnagar region and suggested that he might find a suitable groom in Junagarh instead. Shri Madan Mehta approved of this idea and immediately requested his Purohit to travel to Junagarh.

Shri Madan Mehta had a close friend named Shri Sarangdhar Mehta who lived in Junagarh. Therefore, he gave the Purohit a letter of introduction addressed to Shri Sarangdhar Mehta. Upon reaching Junagarh, the Purohit met Shri Sarangdhar Mehta and delivered the letter. He explained the purpose of his visit and requested assistance in finding a suitable groom for the daughter of Shri Madan Mehta.

The search for a groom then began. However, the Purohit rejected every boy suggested by Shri Sarangdhar Mehta for one reason or another. Eventually, Shri Sarangdhar Mehta became irritated by the Purohit's constant rejection of the proposals. Finally, he

suggested the name of Shamal Das. He informed the Purohit that Shamal Das belonged to the highly respected Nagar Brahmin family of Shri Narsi Mehta. He described Narsi Mehta as a very pious, religious, and noble person, although he was poor. He then pointed out the house of Shri Narsi Mehta.

The Purohit visited the house of Shri Narsi Mehta and met the family, including young Shamal Das. He was greatly impressed by the personality and character of the boy and decided that Shamal Das would be the most suitable groom for Sursena Bai, the daughter of Shri Madan Mehta. Without delay, he finalized the engagement between Shamal Das and Sursena Bai.

After completing his task, the Purohit returned to Vadnagar and narrated the entire story to Shri Madan Mehta. When Shri Madan Mehta heard that Shri Narsi Mehta was a pious, truthful, and honest devotee of the Lord, he did not hesitate to give his daughter's hand to Shamal Das, even though the family was poor. In his heart he thought that the Lord had blessed him with abundant wealth, and he could easily provide sufficient dowry for his daughter so that the couple might live comfortably.

Soon, the news of the engagement between Shamal Das and Sursena Bai—the daughter of the wealthy businessman Shri Madan Mehta—spread throughout Junagarh like wildfire. However, there were many people in Junagarh who were jealous of Shri Narsi Mehta and did not wish to see him honored in this manner. They secretly conspired to disrupt the marriage.

These jealous individuals wrote a letter to Shri Madan Mehta, stating that Narsi was a poor man who lived almost like a beggar and that his family had been outcast by the Nagar Brahmins of Junagarh. They warned him that it would be disgraceful to marry his daughter into such a family and claimed that Shamal Das had no future.

When Shri Madan Mehta received this letter, he became deeply troubled and uncertain about what to do. The marriage had already been fixed by his Purohit. If he were to withdraw from the agreement, his own prestige would be damaged. After much thought, he devised a solution. If Shri Narsi Mehta himself were to withdraw from the engagement, his own reputation would remain intact.

Therefore, he wrote a letter to Shri Narsi Mehta inviting him to perform the traditional **Godh Bharai** ceremony for the bride before the marriage. In the letter, he requested that Shri Narsi Mehta bring clothes, ornaments, cash, and other gifts befitting the status of a wealthy family. He clearly stated that if the ceremony was not conducted according to such a standard, he would be compelled to cancel the engagement.

This invitation for the Godh Bharai ceremony was delivered to Shri Narsi Mehta through the Purohit. When Shri Narsi Mehta received the letter, he calmly took his Kartal in his hands and began singing the glories of Lord Krishna. The Lord understood that His devotee was facing difficulty. Soon, Lord Krishna appeared before him and reassured him not to worry, promising that all arrangements would be made at the proper time.

On the appointed day for the Godh Bharai ceremony, Shri Narsi Mehta prepared to travel to Vadnagar along with a few of his Sadhu companions. When Manik Gauri saw him getting ready to leave without carrying any gifts such as clothes or ornaments for the bride, she became anxious. She requested her husband to borrow some money from a moneylender so that he could purchase suitable gifts before proceeding to Vadnagar.

Shri Narsi Bhagat replied gently, “Manik, you are always worried about these material things. Shamal Das is not only my son—he is also the son of Lord Krishna. Why should we worry when his father is Lord Krishna Himself?”

Having said this, he set out for Vadnagar with his Sadhu companions.

As he approached Vadnagar, he saw a man dressed like the accountant (Munim) of a wealthy merchant coming toward him. The man respectfully greeted Shri Narsi Mehta and informed him that his master, a Seth, had sent several items required for the Godh Bharai ceremony for the bride Sursena Bai.

Shri Narsi Mehta immediately understood that these arrangements had been made by Lord Krishna Himself.

Taking the items with gratitude, Shri Narsi Mehta proceeded to the house of Shri Madan Mehta and performed the Godh Bharai ceremony. Shri Madan Mehta was greatly pleased and deeply moved by the arrangements. Realizing his mistake in writing such a demanding letter earlier, he sincerely apologized to Shri Narsi Mehta.

A few days later, the marriage of Shamal Das and Sursena Bai was celebrated with great grandeur and joy.

Sursena Bai was a virtuous, religious, and well-cultured girl. She lived happily with her husband and her parents-in-law, even though the family remained poor. Time passed peacefully, and Shri Narsi Mehta—now lovingly known by everyone as **Sant Narsi Bhagat**—continued to live his simple life as before, devoted to prayer, serving saints, composing poetry, and singing the glories of the Lord.

## **Shraadh of Father of Shri Narsi Mehta**

Whenever the sacred period of Pitrapaksha arrived, the elder brother of Shri Narsi Bhagat, Shri Banshidhar Mehta, used to perform the ritual of Shraadh at his home. Since this was a family observance, he always invited the family of his younger brother, Shri Narsi Mehta, to participate in the ceremony. This year also, he came personally to invite them and instructed Narsi to be present at his house early in the morning at 7 AM to perform the ritual.

However, the early morning hours were the usual time when Shri Narsi Mehta engaged in his daily spiritual practices—chanting the name of the Lord, offering Naivaidya to the Lord, and serving visiting Sadhus.

With great humility, he said to his brother, “O respected brother, you usually perform this ritual in the middle of the day. Now you have shifted it to the early morning. You know that this is the time when I remain engaged in the service of my Lord and the Sadhus. I must first offer Naivaidya to the Lord and serve the Sadhus in the morning. I will certainly come and join you later in the day for the ritual.”

Shri Banshidhar Mehta became furious upon hearing this. Feeling that his instructions had been disregarded, he left Narsi’s house in anger, declaring that there was no need for Narsi or his family to attend the ceremony. If Narsi wished, he could perform the ritual on his own at his own house.

Shri Narsi Bhagat respectfully accepted the words of his brother and replied gently, “If that is your wish, respected brother, I shall try to perform the ritual at my own house. I know that I am not wealthy like you, so I may only be able to offer a meal to a few Brahmins and perform the ritual in a simple manner.”

**श्रद्धा दीयते अनेनेति श्राद्धं ।**

**Shraddhaa Deeyate Aneneti Shraaddham.**

Shraadh should be performed according to the faith.

It is not meant to be an occasion for pomp and display of wealth by inviting and feeding a large number of people merely for show.

When the day of the Shraadh arrived, there was nothing in the house of Shri Narsi Mehta to prepare a feast for the Brahmins. Seeing the situation, Manik Bai removed her gold earrings and gave them to Shri Narsi Bhagat so that he could sell them and purchase the necessary ingredients for cooking the meal.

Tulsi Das Ji has said that a virtuous wife always shares the sorrows of her husband and stands by him in times of hardship.

**धीरज धरम मित्र और नारी । आपत काल परखिये चारी ।।**

**Dheeraj Dharam Mitra Aur Naaree.  
Aapat Kaal Parakhiye Chaaree.**

Patience, religion, friend and wife, these four should be tested during the time of troubles.

Shri Narsi Bhagat sold the earrings of his wife and bought the necessary ingredients for the feast. However, he forgot to buy Ghee. When he returned home with the provisions, Manik Bai told him that the available ingredients would be sufficient to prepare food for only six or seven people. Therefore, he should invite four or five Brahmins and, while going to invite them, he should also buy some Ghee from the market.

Shri Narsi Bhagat replied, “That is fine,” and left his house to invite a few Brahmins.

When he reached the central market of the town, he encountered some so-called dignified men of his community. They asked him where he was going. Being a simple-hearted Bhagat, he told them truthfully that he was going to perform the Shraadh ritual for his father and was on his way to invite a few Brahmins for the feast.

“Why only a few Brahmins, Bhagat Ji?” they mocked. “All of us should have the right to participate in the ritual and partake of the Prasadam.”

They very well knew that the poor Bhagat did not possess the financial means to feed so many people.

“You are certainly right,” replied Shri Narsi Bhagat politely. “Of course, all of you have the right to partake of the Prasadam. However, I believe you must already have been invited by my wealthy elder brother Banshidhar for the feast tomorrow. Who would accept the invitation of a poor man like me?”

“Do not worry about your brother’s invitation, Bhagat Ji,” they replied in a pretended tone of politeness. “We would be happy to come to your house tomorrow morning, offer Naivaidya to the Lord, and then share the Prasadam with you and your family.”

Such is often the way of those who wish to mock a simple and sincere person. These Brahmins intended to ridicule the innocent Bhagat. Knowing that he could not possibly arrange such a feast, they pressured him to invite them.

But Shri Narsi Bhagat thought differently. In his innocent heart he reflected, “Look at the devotion and simplicity of these kind-hearted Brahmins. They wish to participate with me in offering

Naivaidya to the Lord and share Prasadam. How can I refuse them this opportunity to serve the Lord?”

Thus he replied sincerely, “Of course, why not? All of you are welcome to my house tomorrow to participate in the offering of Naivaidya to the Lord and partake of the Prasadam.”

On the day of the Shraadh, Shri Narsi Bhagat woke early during Brahma Muhurta and proceeded with his daily spiritual routine. He bathed in the pond and then began chanting and meditating upon the name of the Lord. Such was his absorption in devotion that he completely lost track of time. During his meditation, he remembered the following Shlok and became deeply absorbed in contemplation.

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं  
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्ये महाभारतम् ।  
अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीम्- अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम्  
अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्-गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥

**Pārthāya Pratibodhitām Bhagavatā  
Nārāyaṇena Svayaṁ.  
Vyāseṇa Grathitām Purāṇa-Muninā  
Madhye Mahābhāratam.  
Advaitāmṛta Varṣiṇīm  
Bhagavatīm Aṣṭādaśādhyāyinīm.  
AmbaTvām Anusandadhāmi  
Bhagavad-Gīte Bhavadveṣiṇīm.**

O Bhagavadgita, destroyer of rebirth(s), thou hast been instructed to Partha (son of Prutha) by Lord Narayana himself and later included by the ancient sage Vyasa within the Mahabharata. Showerer of the nectar of Advaita, of eighteen chapters, Oh Mother! I meditate upon thee.

Meanwhile, it was already approaching midday, yet there was no sign of Shri Narsi Bhagat returning home. Manik Bai prepared whatever food she could for a few Brahmins with the limited ingredients available, assisted by her daughter-in-law.

She began to worry, thinking to herself, “It seems either my husband has become deeply absorbed in the worship of the Lord or perhaps he has fallen ill. O Lord, please protect my husband. What should I do now?”

Her son Shamal Das and daughter-in-law also became anxious and began praying to the Lord for the safety of Shri Narsi Bhagat.

While she was immersed in these anxious thoughts, she heard footsteps approaching the door.

“It must be my husband returning,” she thought, and a smile appeared on her face.

To her astonishment, she saw her husband entering with several men carrying utensils filled with food.

“What is this, Swami? Why have you brought so much food?” Manik Bai asked in surprise.

Shri Narsi Bhagat calmly replied that he had invited all the Brahmins of the community and that the food had been brought for them. He asked her not to worry about where the food had come from, but to prepare herself to serve the Brahmins who would arrive shortly.

Soon afterward, dozens of Brahmins arrived at the house of Shri Narsi Bhagat. Manik Bai served them all until they were fully satisfied. The food was so delicious and divine that many of them remarked that they had never tasted such food in their entire lives.

Satisfied and humbled, they left the house of Shri Narsi Bhagat with regret for having earlier intended to mock him. They bowed before the idol of Lord Krishna in his house and prayed for forgiveness.

Meanwhile, Shri Narsi Mehta, who was still deeply absorbed in meditation by the pond, eventually returned to ordinary awareness and realized that it was already afternoon. He rushed home while chanting the name of Lord Krishna.

“O Lord,” he murmured anxiously, “how would Manik Bai have managed without me when dozens of Brahmins arrived at the doorstep? My prestige would have been ruined. These Brahmins would surely have mocked me.”

When Shri Narsi Mehta reached home, he saw Brahmins leaving the house after enjoying a sumptuous meal. Unable to understand what had happened, he asked Manik Bai, “I am sorry, Manik. I became absorbed in meditation and thus returned late. What has happened? I see many Brahmins praising me and leaving your house happily.”

Manik Bai replied in surprise, “Why are you speaking this way? You yourself performed the Pitrapaksha ritual for your father and fed all these Brahmins with the food that you brought here in several utensils.”

Hearing this, Shri Narsi Bhagat sat down on the floor and softly murmured, “O my Lord, how shall I ever repay Your kindness? Today You have preserved my honor.”

He gently said to Manik Bai, “My dear, it was not I who performed the ritual. I was sitting near the pond, deeply absorbed in meditation upon the Lord. It is evident that the Lord Himself came in my form, completed the ritual, and fed all these Brahmins.”

Hearing this, Shri Narsi Bhagat, Manik Bai, Shamal Das, and their daughter-in-law bowed before the Lord with deep gratitude and began singing His divine glories.

Filled with devotion, Shri Narsi Bhagat then composed a Bhajan, and all of them joined him in singing it.

वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिये जे पीड़ परायी जाणे रे ।  
वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिये जे पीड़ परायी जाणे रे ॥  
पर दुख्खे उपकार करे तोये मन अभिमान ना आणे रे ।  
वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिये जे पीड़ परायी जाणे रे ॥  
सकळ लोक मान सहने वंदे नींदा न करे केनी रे ।  
वाच काछ मन निश्चळ राखे धन धन जननी तेनी रे ॥  
वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिये जे पीड़ परायी जाणे रे ।  
सम दृष्टी ने तृष्णा त्यागी पर स्त्री जेने मात रे ॥  
जिह्वा थकी असत्य ना बोले पर धन नव झाली हाथ रे ।  
वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिये जे पीड़ परायी जाणे रे ॥  
मोह माया व्यापे नही जेने द्विद्व वैराग्य जेना मन मान रे ।  
राम नाम सुन ताळी लागी सकळ तिरथ तेना तन मान रे ॥  
वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिये जे पीड़ परायी जाणे रे ।  
वण लोभी ने कपट रहित छे काम क्रोध निवार्या रे ॥  
भणे नरसैय्यो तेनुन दर्शन कर्ता कुळ एकोतेर तारया रे ।  
वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिये जे पीड़ परायी जाणे रे ॥

**Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je,  
Peed Parae Jane Re.**

**Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je,  
Peed Parae Jane Re.**

**Par Dukhe Upkar Kare Toye,  
Man Abhiman Na Aane Re.**

**Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je,  
Peed Parae Jane Re.**

**Sakal Lok Maan Sahune Vande,**

**Ninda Naa Kare Keni Re.  
Vach Kach Man Nishchal Rakhe,  
Dhan Dhan Janani Teni Re.  
Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je,  
Peed Parae Jane Re.  
Sam Drishti Ne Trishna Tyagi,  
Par Stri Jene Maat Re.  
Jivha Thaki Ashatya Na Bole,  
Par Dhan Nav Jhali Hath Re.  
Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je,  
Peed Parae Jane Re.  
Moh Maya Vyape Nahi Jene,  
Dradh Vairagya Jen Man Man Re.  
Ram Naam Sun Tali Lagi,  
Sakal Tirth Tena Tan Mann Re.  
Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je,  
Peed Parae Jane Re.  
Van Lobhi Ne Kapat Rahit Chhe,  
Kaam Krodh Nivarya Re.  
Bhane Narsayo Tenu Darshan Karta,  
Kul Ekoter Tarya Re.  
Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je,  
Peed Parae Jane Re.**

One who is a Vaishnav (Devotee of Vishnu) understands the pain of others. Such a person always helps those in distress and never allows pride to enter the mind. A true Vaishnav respects the entire world and bows to all, yet never speaks ill of anyone. His words, actions, and thoughts remain pure and steady; blessed indeed is the mother who has given birth to such a soul.

A Vaishnav views everyone with equal vision and renounces greed and worldly cravings. He respects every woman as he would respect his own mother. Even if his tongue grows weary, he never speaks untruth. He never lays his hands upon the wealth of others.

A true Vaishnav is not entangled in worldly attachments and possesses firm detachment in his heart. With the constant remembrance of the Lord's name, his body and mind become as sacred as all the holy pilgrimages combined.

Such a person remains free from greed and deceit and has conquered lust and anger. The poet Narsi says that the mere sight of such a noble soul is capable of liberating the entire lineage.

Shri Narsi Bhagat truly embodied the qualities of a great ascetic as described by Lord Krishna in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita.

**श्रीभगवानुवाच ।**

**अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।**

**स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निरं चाक्रियः ॥**

**Shrī Bhagavān Uvācha.**

**Anāśhritaḥ karma-phalaṁ kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ.**

**Sa sannyāsī cha yogī cha na niragnir na chākriyaḥ.**

The Supreme Lord said: Those who perform prescribed duties without desiring the fruits of their actions are the true Sanyāsīs (renunciates) and Yogis—not those who have merely abandoned rituals such as agni-hotra yajña or ceased physical activity.

## **Nirvan of Shamal Das and Manik Gauri**

Time continued to pass in this manner. Shri Narsi Bhagat and Manik Gauri Bai lived contentedly with their daughter-in-law Sursena Bai, who was truly like an incarnation of Lakshmi. Through her gentle nature, devotion, and noble conduct, she won the affection of not only her parents-in-law but also the entire community.

However, only a few years had passed in this peaceful and happy life when tragedy struck. One day, Shamal Das suddenly fell seriously ill. Physicians tried their best to treat him, but despite all efforts, he could not be saved.

The death of Shamal Das deeply affected both his mother Manik Bai and his wife Sursena Bai. Shri Narsi Bhagat did everything he could to console them. Though he himself was heartbroken by the loss of his young son, he remained steadfast in his devotion to the Lord. In his understanding, every sorrow in life concealed a deeper divine purpose. Perhaps the Lord wished to draw his mind completely toward Him, and therefore was gradually removing his worldly attachments.

At that moment, he remembered an episode from the life of Kunti.

After the great war of the Mahabharata had ended, the wicked Ashwathama had slain the five sons of Draupadi. Although Kunti was deeply grieved by the loss of all her grandchildren, when Lord Krishna asked her to ask for a boon, she requested Him to grant her more sorrows. In times of sorrow, one constantly remembers the Lord and seeks His protection, whereas in times of happiness, people often forget the Lord and become absorbed in fleeting worldly pleasures.

Reflecting upon this wisdom, Shri Narsi Bhagat composed a poem to console his wife Manik Bai and daughter-in-law Sursena Bai.

**भलुं थयुं भंगी जंजाल, सुखे भजीशुं श्रीगोपाल ।**

**Bhalum Thayum Bhangee Janjaal.  
Sukhe Bhajeeshum Shree Gopaal.**

Thanks Lord, You have removed the whirlpool of worldly bondage. Now we may sing Your glories with greater devotion and peace.

These words of faith brought some consolation to Manik Bai. Yet she was, after all, a grieving mother. Her health gradually began to deteriorate.

On one Ekadasi day, Shri Narsi Bhagat was invited by a devotee of a lower caste to conduct a Kirtan at his home. Although he knew that Manik Bai was unwell and needed his presence, he could not refuse the sincere request of his devotee. Before leaving, he requested his daughter-in-law Sursena Bai to take good care of Manik Bai.

The Kirtan continued throughout the entire night. When Shri Narsi Bhagat returned home the next morning, Manik Bai was breathing her last. In truth, she had been waiting only for her husband to return so that she could depart from this world peacefully in his presence.

Realizing the seriousness of her condition, Shri Narsi Bhagat tried everything possible to save her, but it was too late. Manik Bai quietly attained Nirvana.

Bhakta Shiromani Shri Narsi Mehta was deeply devastated by the passing of his wife. Yet, being a true devotee of the Lord, he

steadied his mind by remembering the words of Lord Krishna from the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita.

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।  
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥

**Yo na hrīṣhyati na dveṣṭī na śhochati na kāṅkṣhati.  
śhubhāśhubha-parityāgī bhaktimān yaḥ sa me priyaḥ.**

Those who neither rejoice in worldly pleasures nor despair in sorrow, who neither lament over loss nor long for gain, who renounce both good and evil actions, and who remain steadfast in devotion—such devotees are very dear to Me.

The death of Manik Bai spread through the town like wildfire. She was a kind-hearted, gentle, and loving woman who was always ready to help others. Even though many people were jealous of Sant Shiromani Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji, everyone held Manik Bai in deep affection and respect. Thousands gathered at the house of Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji to take part in her funeral procession.

Shri Narsi Bhagat performed all the last rites of his wife in accordance with Shruti. In those days, it was customary for the funeral procession to be led by a respected member of the community, since the bereaved family, overwhelmed by grief, was not in a position to receive and attend to the guests. Accordingly, the procession was led by Shri Sharangdhar Mehta, a prominent man of the community.

Shri Sharangdhar Mehta, however, never truly liked Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji. Outwardly, he appeared sorrowful and offered condolences over the passing of Manik Bai, but inwardly he was waiting for an opportunity to insult Shri Narsi Bhagat. Soon he found such an opportunity.

He said to Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji, “O Bhagat, it is the tradition of the Nagar Brahmin Samaj that all those who attend the funeral ceremony must be invited to the funeral feast on the thirteenth day. Therefore, on your behalf, since I am leading the procession, I invite all the Nagar Brahmins to come to your house on the thirteenth day for the funeral feast.”

Narsi Bhagat Ji replied with humility, “O holy and pious Brahmin Sharangdhar Ji, you know that I am a poor Brahmin and do not have the means to feed such a large community numbering in the hundreds. Shrutis says that one should perform rituals according to one’s means. I was thinking of inviting only a couple of Brahmins to complete the rite.”

Shri Sharangdhar Mehta immediately objected and said, “No, no, you cannot do this. That would be against our tradition. Unless you receive the blessings of the entire community, the soul of your wife will not attain peace. There is no excuse. You must invite all the Nagar Brahmins for the funeral feast.”

Before Shri Narsi Mehta could utter another word, Shri Sharangdhar Mehta turned to the gathered Nagar Brahmins and publicly invited them all to a grand feast at the house of Shri Narsi Bhagat on the thirteenth day of the ritual.

Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji was left wondering how he could possibly fulfill such an obligation. He went to a traditional cook and asked how much it would cost to prepare a feast for nearly one thousand people. The cook told him that it would require approximately seven hundred rupees.

Seven hundred rupees was an enormous amount for Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji. He did not even have seven rupees in his pocket. He then thought of borrowing the money from a moneylender. But he had nothing to offer as security. Why would a moneylender risk lending such a sum to a poor man like Shri Narsi Mehta, who had

nothing to mortgage and no visible means of repayment? Troubled in mind, he sat in prayer before the Lord. When he completed his Kirtan, he resolved to go to the moneylender nevertheless and humbly request a loan of seven hundred rupees.

The town moneylender knew Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji well. He was aware that his wife had recently passed away. He welcomed him respectfully, offered condolences, and then asked the reason for his visit. Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji hesitantly asked whether he could lend him seven hundred rupees for the funeral feast of his wife. He confessed that he had nothing to mortgage, but promised that as soon as he was able, he would repay the amount along with any interest the moneylender might charge.

The moneylender looked at him and said, “Bhagat Ji, I know that you are an honest man, a true devotee of the Lord, and one who stands by his word. I have no doubt that you will repay me. But I too have a principle: I never lend money without taking something in mortgage from the borrower. I cannot depart from that rule. If you do not mind, I shall accept one hair from your moustache as security. As for interest, one day I too must show my face before the Lord. I would rot in hell if I were to charge interest from a great devotee of the Lord like you. So if you accept my conditions—that you give me one hair from your moustache in mortgage and that you do not insist that I charge interest—then I am happy to lend you the seven hundred rupees. You may repay it whenever it becomes possible.”

Shri Narsi Mehta thanked the Lord, accepted the moneylender’s conditions, gave one hair of his moustache as mortgage, and took the loan.

Thereafter, he performed the funeral rites for his wife properly according to Shruti, and the grand funeral feast was held with all the Nagar Brahmins in attendance.

After the ceremony was over, Shri Narsi Bhagat continued to think about how he would repay the loan he had taken. The Lord was listening to his prayers and was already arranging the means by which Shri Narsi Mehta would settle the debt.

Around that time, some pilgrims from the town were preparing to travel to Dwarka to pay their respects to Lord Krishna. In those days, there was no banking system by which one could deposit money in one place and withdraw it in another. Carrying cash on long journeys was dangerous because of thieves and dacoits. Therefore, a Hundi system was commonly used. A Hundi was an unconditional written order by a person in his own town directing another person in another town—usually an associate—to pay a specified sum to the bearer, in return for a small fee.

These pilgrims approached the town moneylender and requested him to accept their money and write a Hundi payable in Dwarka through one of his associates. Perhaps it was the will of God. The moneylender told them that he had no associate in Dwarka, but he knew someone who did have an associate there and could write the Hundi for them. That person, he said, was Shri Narsi Bhagat. “His associate Krishna is in Dwarka,” he told them.

Trusting the moneylender’s words, the pilgrims came to the house of Shri Narsi Bhagat. Shri Narsi Mehta tried to explain that perhaps they had been misdirected, for he had no associate in Dwarka. But the pilgrims insisted that the moneylender had clearly told them that Shri Narsi Bhagat had an associate there by the name of Krishna.

The moment Shri Narsi Bhagat heard the name Krishna as his associate, he understood that this was the Lord’s own divine play. He agreed to write the Hundi. The amount the pilgrims wished to send was exactly seven hundred rupees—the very sum Shri Narsi Mehta had borrowed from the moneylender. Shri Narsi Bhagat

accepted the seven hundred rupees from the pilgrims and wrote the Hundi in the name of “Shyamla Girdhari” of Dwarka.

The pilgrims then traveled to Dwarka carrying the Hundi. On arriving there, they began searching for Seth Shyamla Girdhari. They searched everywhere but could not find anyone by that name. Saddened and disappointed, they sat in the temple of the Lord, convinced that they had been cheated by Shri Narsi Bhagat.

Meanwhile, in Junagarh, Shri Narsi Bhagat continued to pray to the Lord and composed a Bhajan in His praise, repeatedly beseeching Him, “O Lord, please accept my Hundi.”

म्हारी हुंडी स्वीकारो महाराज रे, सांवरा गिरधारी,  
म्हाने एक छे थारो आधार रे, सांवरा गिरधारी,  
म्हारी हुण्डी स्वीकारो महाराज रे, सांवरा गिरधारी ।

राखि पत प्रहलाद की, धर नरसिंह अवतार,  
खम्भ फाड़ प्रकट भए, तारयो भूमि को सारो भार रे,  
सांवरा गिरधारी, म्हारी हुण्डी स्वीकारो महाराज रे,  
सांवरा गिरधारी ।

पूँजी गोपी चंदन मेरो, तुलसी सोने रो हार,  
साँचा गहना सांवरा, म्हारी दौलत छे,  
झांझ कड़ताल रे, सांवरा गिरधारी,  
म्हारी हुण्डी स्वीकारो महाराज रे,  
सांवरा गिरधारी ।  
राणा जी ने विष दियो, छल मीरा रे साथ,  
प्याला विष अमृत भयो, राखि भक्ता की जाती लाज रे,  
सांवरा गिरधारी,

म्हारी हुंडी स्वीकारो महाराज रे, सांवरा गिरधारी,  
म्हाने एक छे थारो आधार रे, सांवरा गिरधारी,  
म्हारी हुण्डी स्वीकारो महाराज रे, सांवरा गिरधारी ।

Mhari hundee sveekaaro mahaaraaj re,  
Saanvara giradhaaree,

Mhaane ek chhe thaaro aadhaar re,  
Saanvara giradhaaree,  
Mhari hundee sveekaaro mahaaraaj re,  
Saanvara giradhaaree.

Raakhi pat prahalaad kee,  
Dhar narasinh avataar,  
Khambh phad prakat bhe,  
Taarayo bhoomi ko saaro bhaar re,  
Sanvara girdhari,  
Mhari hundi svikaro maharaj re,  
Sanvara giradhaaree.

Poonjee gopee chandan mero,  
Tulasee sone ro haar,  
Saancha gahana saanvara,  
Mhaaree daulat chhe,  
Jhaanjh kadताल re,  
Saanvara giradhaaree.  
Mhaari hundi sveekaaro mahaaraaj re,  
Saanvara giradhaaree.

Raana jee ne vish diyo,  
Chhal meera re saath,  
Pyaala vish amrat bhayo,  
Raakhi bhakta kee jaatee laaj re,  
Sanvara giradhaaree.

**Mharee hundee sveekaaro mahaaraaj re,  
Saanvara giradhaaree.**

**Mhaane ek chhe thaaro aadhaar re,  
Saanvara giradhaaree,  
Mhari hundee sveekaaro mahaaraaj re,  
Saanvara giradhaaree.**

Accept my Hundi (bill), O Shyamal (Krishna) Maharaj. I have only Your support. O Lord, You saved Prahlad by taking the form of Narasimha. You emerged through the pillar and saved the world by killing Hiranyakahapu. My wealth is my Gopichandan and Tulsi is my necklace. My wealth is cymbals Accept my hundi, O Shyamal (Krishna) Maharaj. Ranaji was angry and sent a cup of poison to Mirabai. The poison becomes nectar with your graced. Accept my hundi, Maharaj. I have only Your support.

As the pilgrims sat sorrowfully in Dwarka in the temple of the Lord, a man dressed like a Marwari merchant approached them and asked whether they were looking for Seth Shyamla Girdhari.

“Yes, yes, we are,” the pilgrims replied eagerly.

“That is good,” said the merchant. “I have just received word that you have a Hundi for seven hundred rupees addressed to me. Give it to me, and I shall give you the amount.”

The pilgrims handed over the Hundi and received the full seven hundred rupees from the merchant. Their joy knew no bounds. From the depths of their hearts arose cries of victory and praise for Lord Krishna and for Shri Narsi Bhagat.

Here in Junagarh, the Lord appeared in the dream of Shri Narsi Bhagat and said, “O Bhagat, your Hundi of seven hundred rupees has been honored by the pilgrims. Now go and repay the seven hundred rupees to the moneylender.”

Accordingly, Shri Narsi Bhagat repaid the moneylender's loan.

Shri Madan Mehta, the father of Sursena Bai, was also deeply grieved by the death of his young son-in-law Shamal Das and now by the passing of Manik Bai. He came to Junagarh and requested Saint Shri Narsi Bhagat to send Sursena Bai with him to Vadnagar for a few days so that a change of place might bring her some relief.

Saint Shri Narsi Bhagat gladly agreed. Although Sursena Bai did not wish to leave her father-in-law alone in such a condition, her father lovingly persuaded her to come with him for a short time.

Unfortunately, shaken first by the death of her husband and then by the loss of her mother-in-law, she too passed away a few months after this episode.

## **Shri Narsi Bhagat Outcasted by Brahmins**

Shri Narsi Bhagat was a true devotee of the Lord and firmly lived by the principle:

**हरि को भजे, सो हरि को होइ ।**

**Hari Ko Bhaje, So Hari Ko Hoi.**

The one who worships Lord, belongs to the Lord.

He did not believe in any discrimination based on religion, caste, social status, or gender among devotees. Whenever devotees from the lower castes requested him, he would freely visit their homes and conduct Kirtan there. This conduct, however, did not please the other high-caste Nagar Brahmins of Junagarh. As a result, all the Nagar Brahmins of Junagarh assembled in a so-called religious gathering and declared Shri Narsi Bhagat an outcaste.

At that time, Shri Krishna Rai, a respected Nagar Brahmin of Junagarh, organized a grand religious ceremony. On the concluding day of the function, he invited all the Nagar Brahmins of the town for a grand feast—except Shri Narsi Bhagat.

The Lord is never pleased when His devotee is insulted. A miracle occurred during the feast arranged by Shri Krishna Rai. As the Brahmins sat to partake of the meal, each one noticed what appeared to be a lower-caste person seated beside him, eating from the same line. Feeling that they had been defiled, the Brahmins rose at once and left without touching the food. Shri Krishna Rai was devastated. The offerings he had made were not accepted by the Lord.

He pleaded with the Brahmins, insisting that he had done nothing to offend them and that he had not invited any lower-caste person

to the feast. He requested them all to gather again and forgive him. He also asked them to help find a solution so that such an illusion or occurrence would never happen again.

Among those assembled was a pious man named Shri Anant Rai. He said to the Brahmins that Shri Narsi Bhagat was a great devotee of the Lord, and that all this had happened only because they had insulted him by not inviting him. The Lord, he said, would never tolerate the insult of His devotee. Therefore, they should go to Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji, seek forgiveness from him, and restore him to the community by withdrawing their earlier decision to outcaste him.

A few other devout Brahmins supported Shri Anant Rai's words. Accordingly, they all decided to go to the house of Shri Narsi Bhagat and beg his forgiveness. Saints possess hearts that are soft and compassionate. The moment the Brahmins approached him in a spirit of repentance, Shri Narsi Bhagat immediately embraced them.

**सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीन मध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।  
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥**

**Suhṛinmitrāryudāsīna Madhyasthadveṣhyabandhuṣhu.  
Sādhuṣhvapi cha pāpeṣhu Sama-buddhir viśiṣhyate.**

The yogis look upon all well-wishers, friends, foes, the pious, and the sinners with an impartial intellect. The yogi who is of equal intellect toward friend, companion, and foe, neutral among enemies and relatives, and impartial between the righteous and sinful, is considered to be distinguished among humans.

Thereafter, Shri Narsi Mehta accompanied all the Brahmins to the house of Shri Krishna Rai, took part in the feast, and only then were the offerings of Shri Krishna Rai accepted by the Lord.

## **Mameru Ceremony of Kunwar Bai**

As stated earlier, Kunwar Bai, the daughter of Shri Narsi Bhagat, had been married into a prosperous family. Her husband was Shri Vasant Rai, the son of Shri Shrirang Mehta of the village of Una in Kathiawar, Gujarat. Kunwar Bai was a deeply cultured and virtuous lady, wholly dedicated to the service of her in-laws. She performed all the household duties in her husband's family without complaint. Yet, despite her sincerity and obedience, she was treated harshly in that household.

Kunwar Bai lived in a joint family with her husband, parents-in-law, sister-in-law, and others. Her mother-in-law and sister-in-law were both of a cruel nature. Since her father, Shri Narsi Mehta, was poor and unable to send gifts on every festival—as was customary in Gujarati families in those days—her mother-in-law looked down upon her. This became one of the reasons for her constant mistreatment. Very often, Kunwar Bai had to endure taunts and harsh words from both her mother-in-law and sister-in-law.

Unfortunately, she also did not become a mother for a long time. Her husband, Shri Vasant Rai, who was immoral, irritable, and given to drink, would threaten to marry another woman in order to have children. Her contact with her father, Saint Shri Narsi Mehta, had been completely cut off. After her marriage, she was never permitted to visit her father. Many tragedies had taken place in her father's life—the deaths of her brother, her mother, and her sister-in-law—but she knew nothing of them. Her only source of comfort was her good-natured father-in-law, Shri Shrirang Mehta, who understood her inward suffering, though he was powerless to help her because of his fear of his wife and son.

Kunwar Bai would often go alone into the prayer room, weep before Lord Vitthal, and pray to be blessed with motherhood. At last, the Lord heard her prayers, and she conceived. When she

reached the eighth month of her pregnancy, the traditional Gujarati custom of **Mameru**—the baby shower ceremony—was to be performed. In this ceremony, the father of the expectant mother brings gifts to the family of her in-laws.

Since her mother-in-law knew that Kunwar Bai's father was poor and would not be able to afford any gifts, she did not even care to invite him for the ceremony. But Kunwar Bai, who had not seen her father for a very long time, deeply desired that he should come. Her father-in-law could not bear to see her in such sorrow and therefore decided to invite her father for the Mameru ceremony. He sent his Purohit personally to Junagarh to invite Saint Shri Narsi Mehta.

It was the following afternoon when the Purohit arrived at the house of Shri Narsi Mehta with the invitation to attend his daughter's Mameru ceremony. Shri Narsi Bhagat had just finished his meal. He welcomed the Purohit respectfully, offered him food, and accepted the invitation with a pure and loving heart. The Purohit returned to Kathiawar the next day.

Shri Narsi Bhagat reflected within himself that this might perhaps be the final worldly duty he had yet to fulfill. He wished to do his best to please his daughter and her in-laws. But how could he do so? He was extremely poor and did not have even a single rupee in his pocket. How could he perform such a grand Mameru ceremony in a manner befitting the social standing of his daughter's in-laws? With these thoughts filling his heart, he began singing Kirtan in praise of the Lord and prayed that the Lord Himself would become his savior.

The day fixed for the Mameru ceremony was very near, and he now had to leave for Kathiawar in order to arrive on time. He requested some of his Sadhu friends to accompany him, and they gladly agreed. He then discussed with them how they might travel to Kathiawar. The Sadhus advised him that, being a well-known

person in town, he might approach one of his acquaintances and request the loan of an oxcart. Following their advice, Shri Narsi Bhagat made the request, and at last one acquaintance agreed to lend him an oxcart. However, it was in a dilapidated condition, and the oxen yoked to it were also very old.

Thus, Shri Narsi Bhagat and the Sadhus set out on their journey to Kathiawar in that broken-down cart, drawn by old oxen, while singing the glories of the Lord. As expected, the cart, being in such poor condition, broke down in the middle of the الطريق. Shri Narsi Bhagat did not know what to do and at once began praying to the Lord for help.

Then, suddenly and from nowhere, to the amazement of everyone, a young man appeared before them and asked whether he could be of any assistance. Shri Narsi Bhagat explained that their cart had broken down. The young man replied that he was a carpenter by profession and could repair the cart.

With great humility, Shri Narsi Bhagat said that he was a poor man and had no money to offer as payment for the repair. If the young man was willing to help voluntarily, he would gratefully accept the kindness.

The young man replied, “Certainly, there is no problem. I shall not charge anything for my labor. Is it true that you are going to Kathiawar? I too am going to the same town to meet one of my dear friends. If you could allow me to travel with you in your oxcart, I would consider that my remuneration.”

“Oh yes, certainly, that would be our pleasure,” Shri Narsi Bhagat immediately replied.

The young man, who carried tools in his bag, took them out at once and began repairing the cart. In a very short time, he had fixed it completely. Thereafter, they all resumed their journey to

Kathiawar. As always, Shri Narsi Bhagat once again began his Kirtan in praise of the Lord.

दर्शन दो घनश्याम नाथ मोरी, अँखियाँ प्यासी रे ।  
मन मंदिर की जोत जगा दो, घट घट वासी रे ॥

मंदिर मंदिर मूरत तेरी, फिर भी न दीखे सूरत तेरी ।  
युग बीते ना आई मिलन की पूरनमासी रे ॥

द्वार दया का जब तू खोले, पंचम सुर में गूंगा बोले ।  
अंधा देखे लंगड़ा चल कर पहुँचे काशी रे ॥

पानी पी कर प्यास बुझाऊँ, नैनन को कैसे समजाऊँ ।  
आँख मिचौली छोड़ो अब तो मन के वासी रे ॥

निर्बल के बल धन निर्धन के, तुम रखवाले भक्त जनों के ।  
तेरे भजन में सब सुख पाऊँ, मिटे उदासी रे ॥

नाम जपे पर तुझे ना जाने, उनको भी तू अपना माने ।  
तेरी दया का अंत नहीं है, हे दुःख नाशी रे ॥

आज फैसला तेरे द्वार पर, मेरी जीत है तेरी हार पर ।  
हर जीत है तेरी मैं तो, चरण उपासी रे ॥

द्वार खडा कब से मतवाला, मांगे तुम से हार तुम्हारी ।  
नरसी की ये बिनती सुन लो, भक्त विलासी रे ॥

लाज ना लुट जाए प्रभु तेरी, नाथ करो ना दया में देरी ।  
नरसी की ये बिनती सुन लो, भक्त विलासी रे ॥

**Darshan do ghanashyaam naath moree,  
Ankhiyaan pyaasee re.  
Man mandir kee jot jaga do,  
Ghaat ghaat vaasi re.**

**Mandir mandir moorat teree,  
Phir bhee na deekhe soorat teree.  
Yug beete na aace milan kee  
Pooranamaasee re.**

**Dvaar daya ka jab too khole,  
Pancham sur mein goonga bole.  
Andha dekhe langada chal kar  
Panhuche kaashee re.**

**Paanee pee kar pyaas bujhaon,  
Nainan ko kaise samajoon.  
Aankh michaulee chhodo ab to  
Man ke vaasee re.**

**Nirbal ke bal dhan nirdhan ke,  
Tum rakhavaale bhakt janon ke.  
Tere bhajan mein sab such paon,  
Mite udaasee re.**

**Naam jape par tujhe na jaane,  
Unako bhee too apana maane.  
Teree daya ka ant Nahin hai,  
He dukh naashee re.**

**Aaj phaisala tere dvaar par, meree  
Jeet hai teree haar par.  
Har jeet hai teree main to,  
Charan upaasee re.  
Dvar khada kab se matavaala,  
Maange tum se haar tumhaaree.**

**Narasee kee ye binatee sunalo,  
Bhakt vilaasee re.**

O Lord Ghanshyam (Krishna, dark-complexioned like a cloud), please grant me your vision (darshan); my eyes are thirsty for you. Light the lamp in the temple of my heart/mind, O Indweller of all hearts (one who resides in every soul). Your idol is in every temple, yet I do not see your actual face.

An age has passed, but the full-moon night of our meeting has not yet arrived. When you open the door of your compassion, even the dumb (mute) speaks in a melodious voice. (By your grace) The blind person sees, and the lame person walks to reach the holy city of Kashi. I can quench my bodily thirst by drinking water, but how do I convince my eyes (which crave for you)? O dweller of my heart, please stop this game of hide-and-seek. O Lord Ghanshyam (Krishna, dark-complexioned like a cloud), please grant me your vision (darshan); my eyes are thirsty for you. Light the lamp in the temple of my heart/mind, O Indweller of all hearts (one who resides in every soul). Your idol is in every temple, yet I do not see your actual face. An age has passed, but the full-moon night of our meeting has not yet arrived. When you open the door of your compassion, even the dumb (mute) speaks in a melodious (fifth) voice. (By your grace) The blind person sees, and the lame person walks to reach the holy city of Kashi. I can quench my bodily thirst by drinking water, but how do I convince my eyes (which crave for you)? O dweller of my heart, please stop this game of hide-and-seek. You are the strength of the weak and wealth of the poor. You take care of Your devotees. On singing about you, I get all happiness and all my sadness is wiped away. Those who recite Your names but do not yet know You, You accept them too as Your own. There is no end to Your compassion. O destroyer of misery, today the decision is Yours to make my victory lies in Your defeat. Victory and defeat are both Yours. I simply worship Your feet. I am standing at Your door in desperation asking You for Your defeat. Please listen to Narsi's request, O lover of Your devotees.

Everyone present was enchanted by the melodious singing of this Bhajan by Shri Narsi Bhagat. So absorbed did they become in its sweetness and devotion that they lost all sense of time, and before long they had reached Kathiawar. On arriving there, the young man requested permission to take leave of Shri Narsi Bhagat and his companions, and then quietly departed. Shri Narsi Bhagat thereafter proceeded to the house of Shri Shrirang Mehta Ji.

Unfortunately, Shri Shrirang Mehta Ji was not at home at that time. When his wife heard that a poor old man was standing at the entrance waiting for her husband, she came out to see who it was. At once she recognized Shri Narsi Bhagat. When she saw the poor and aged saint, accompanied by his devotee-friends in an old worn-out oxcart and carrying no visible gifts, she became furious. Yet she could not openly turn him away. Therefore, she instructed her maidservant to arrange for the stay of Shri Narsi Bhagat and his companions in the cowshed (Gaushala). Shri Narsi Bhagat accepted the arrangement with humility and quietly went to the Gaushala with his companions.

When Kunwar Bai came to know that her father had arrived and had been made to stay in the Gaushala, her heart was filled with sorrow. But what could that helpless daughter do, being entirely under the authority of her harsh mother-in-law? At dawn she went to meet her father. Seeing him after such a long time, she was overcome with emotion. Shri Narsi Bhagat now looked frail, weak, and almost like a skeleton. She embraced him and wept bitterly. Shri Narsi Bhagat gently tried to console her. When she had become calm after some time, she asked him about the welfare of her mother, her brother, and her sister-in-law. For a while Shri Narsi Bhagat remained silent, and then softly said, "Do not worry, all are in the care of the Lord."

The following day was the appointed day of the Mameru ceremony. According to the custom of those times, before offering any gifts, the father of the would-be mother had first to bathe,

remain in wet clothes, and perform the initial prayer. Only after this purificatory act could the gifts be offered. When Shri Narsi Bhagat came from the Gaushala to the house of Shri Shrirang Mehta Ji, he was taken to an open courtyard for bathing. The crooked wife of Shri Shrirang Mehta deliberately sent him a bucket of boiling hot water for his bath. Shri Narsi Bhagat politely requested that some cold water be brought to mix with it. At this, Kunwar Bai's mother-in-law responded in a sharp and mocking tone, "O Bhagat, I have heard that you are very dear to the Lord. Why do you not pray to Him to shower some cold water from the sky for you?"

Hearing these disrespectful and sarcastic words, Shri Narsi Mehta asked one of his devotee companions to hand him the Kartal. He then began to pray and sing a Bhajan in the glory of the Lord. Soon he became deeply absorbed in that divine singing. Then, suddenly, clouds gathered in the sky from nowhere, and rain began to pour down. Shri Narsi Bhagat took his bath in that shower sent by the Lord Himself.

Meanwhile, everyone in the household and among the gathered relatives was curious to see what gifts Shri Narsi Bhagat might have brought for the ceremony. At that very moment, a gentleman dressed as a wealthy Marwari businessman approached the place where the Mameru ceremony was to be performed and asked for Shri Narsi Bhagat. He introduced himself as having come from Dwarka. He said that he was the son of a devotee of Shri Narsi Bhagat. In the time of their distress, Shri Narsi Bhagat had blessed them and given them some money, which had helped them survive. By the grace of Shri Narsi Bhagat, he said, their business had now flourished. Therefore, he had come to repay that debt and had brought gifts for the Mameru ceremony.

Then Seth Ji opened the baskets he had brought. Everyone in the family, and all those present at the ceremony, received gifts beyond anything they could have imagined. The entire place resounded

with cries of “Jay Jaykar” in praise of Seth Ji and Shri Narsi Bhagat Ji. Kunwar Bai’s mother-in-law was deeply ashamed. She fell at the feet of Shri Narsi Bhagat and begged his forgiveness. Shri Narsi Bhagat, being a compassionate saint with a forgiving heart, pardoned her at once and embraced her.

Shri Narsi Bhagat understood within himself that this Seth was none other than Lord Krishna Himself. With gratitude overflowing in his heart, he continued to pray to the Lord. After the ceremony had been completed, he departed the next day with his companions and returned to his native town of Junagarh.

After returning home, Shri Narsi Bhagat dedicated himself completely to the Lord. He continued composing Bhajans and singing His divine glories. In Vikram Samvat 1577, he left this mortal world to dwell eternally with his beloved Lord and attained salvation.

## The Poetic Work of Shri Narsi Bhagat

Shri Narsi Bhagat was a great Gujarati poet and an unparalleled devotee of Lord Krishna. Such was the depth of his devotion that no worldly matter could ever divert him from his supreme goal—the attainment of oneness with Lord Krishna.

The poetry of the devotional saint Shri Narsi Bhagat is suffused with pure devotion (Ananya Bhakti), mysticism, and spiritual instruction. His verses emphasize the purity of the immortal soul over the mere outward cleanliness of the mortal body. Many of his poems also advocate the removal of social evils such as class and caste discrimination. In one of his devotional utterances, he sings:

**विना नर सदा सूतकी, विमल कीढे वपु शुद्ध न थाये ।**

**Vina Nar Sada Sootaki, Vimal Kidhe Vapu Shuddha Na Thaye'**

One who is away from devotion to Lord Krishna is untouchable, that is not worth human. Mere cleaning of the body does not assure purity.

As noted earlier, Shri Narsi Bhagat's upper-caste family could not accept his frequent visits to the homes of lower-caste people, nor his devotional musical gatherings (Kirtans) among them. Because of his peaceful yet revolutionary efforts to bridge the divisions of caste hierarchy and spread the love and praise of Lord Krishna to all, Shri Narsi Bhagat was boycotted by his own community. Whenever people of his caste tried to remind him of the supposed distinction between high and low, Shri Narsi Bhagat would simply laugh and respond through song:

हलवा कर्मा नो हू नरसइयो मुझे।  
वैष्णव व्हाळा रे हरि-जांथी जे अंतर  
गणेश तेना फोगत फेरा थाला रे।

**Halva Karma No Hu Narsaiyo Mujne.  
Vaishnav Vhala Re Hari-Janthi  
Je Antar Ganesh Tena Fogat Fera Thala Re.**

I am the poet named Narsi who is a man of normal deeds. I love the Vaishnavas who are free from differences between classes. The human life of those is wasted who distance themselves from the Harijans (God's people), that is lower caste people.

The poetry of Shri Narsi Bhagat is outwardly simple, yet profound in its evocation of truths drawn from the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the larger scriptural tradition of India. His compositions affirm hope for world peace and deep faith in union with the Supreme Godhead, Lord Krishna. He urges human beings to abandon hypocrisy and vanity so that the path leading to the Supreme Being may become smooth and clear, enabling one to attain the true purpose of human life. He inspires faith and confidence in his listeners and readers, saying:

हरि हरि रतन कर, कथन कलि काल मा, दम बेसेनाहिकमसरसे।

**Hari Hari Ratan Kar, Kathan Kali Kal Ma,  
Dam Besenahikamsarse.**

Keep chanting the name of Hari (the name of God) in this Kaliyuga. It does not cost any money and your work will be done easily.

He teaches that although material prosperity has always been one of the greatest desires of human beings, true prosperity can never be attained at the cost of ethics and loyalty toward Dharma. One

should never forget the Supreme Lord, who has been gracious in bestowing all blessings. Shri Narsi Bhagat reminds us that worldly wealth will not support anyone at the time of death. Therefore, he advises all to continue chanting the name of God. He further says that a greedy person is like a fool who ignores the strong trunk of a tree and instead clings to a frail branch that may break at the slightest adversity.

Many of Shri Narsi Bhagat's poetic lines became famous as proverbial sayings. Though brief in form, they are filled with deep philosophy and the essential truths of life. These lines reflect not only moral wisdom and universal truth, but also the power of the Almighty, the role of destiny, and the futility of vanity, arrogance, and self-praise. At times, Shri Narsi Bhagat sounds sharp and even bitter when he rebukes arrogant and hypocritical people who foolishly claim credit for the smallest success. In such a context, he says:

**हु करु हु करु एज अग्यन्ता  
शक्त नः भर इम श्वान तने ।**

**Hu Karu Hu Karu Ej Agyanta,  
Shakat No Bhar Iem Shwan Tane.**

It is the biggest ignorance to take credit for all the deeds. It is like a dog that walks beneath a cart and considers that it is he who carries the load of the cart.

The verses of Shri Narsi Bhagat are distilled from the essence of devotion and Vedic wisdom, glorifying Brahman, the Supreme Godhead. He was born into a conservative society that, in a misguided way, often assumed that merely applying sandalwood Tilak, wearing a Tulsi rosary, visiting temples, or worshipping trees, rivers, and mountains could bring one closer to the Lord. Shri Narsi Bhagat taught instead that one comes near to the

Almighty only through righteous conduct and noble deeds. Like many Bhakta poets of 15th-century India, he preached that the individual soul is a part of Brahma; therefore, the “Supreme Element of God” must be sought within one’s own inner being rather than through pretentious displays meant to gain recognition as a learned devotee. In one of his verses, he ridicules such ornamental and superficial approaches to religion and says:

**हे चेपरपंचसाहु पेट भरवा, तन आत्मपरिब्रह्मनायोज्यो,  
भने भने नर्सैयो के तत्त्वदर्शन विना रत्नचिन्तामणि जन्म खोया।**

**E Cheparpanchsahu Pet Bharva  
Tan Aatmaramparibrahmnajoyo  
Bhane Narsaiyo Ke Tatvadarshan  
Vina, Ratnachintamani Janm Khoyo.**

One who lives life under the fallacy of being recognized as the spokesperson of Dharma and God, can easily cheat on the ignorant people. Such people are actually wasting their human life as they are far away from the tatvadarshan (the auspicious sight of the Truth incarnate).

Thus, Shri Narsi Bhagat exhorts humanity to love God unconditionally rather than attempting to impress Him through external pretensions.

He addresses the human being with exalted expressions such as:

**आत्माराम और रत्नचिन्तामणि।**

**Atmaram aur Ratnachintamani.**

The soul itself is as pious as Lord and the human birth itself is like ‘Ratnachintamani’, the precious gem which can fetch whatever one desires.

According to him, the longing for material pleasures and sensual enjoyments, even when fulfilled, is ultimately vain, because it does not lead the soul toward union with God. Human birth is meant to attain oneness with the Divine. The soul, आत्मराम (Atmaram), is indestructible even when the body perishes:

**न हन्यते हनीयमाने शरीर ।**

**Na Hanyate Hanyamane Sharir (Shimadbhagwad Gita).**

The human body, therefore, should be engaged in such actions as preserve the purity and virtue of the soul, just as it was at birth. Shri Narsi Bhagat is deeply suggestive in his use of these expressions. Many of his philosophical verses are simple in language, yet profound in their relation to Brahmgyaan (ब्रह्मज्ञान), the knowledge of the Supreme Godhead, Brahma. In this way he reiterates the teachings of Lord Krishna:

**जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।  
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥**

**Janma karma ca me divyamevam yo veti tattvataḥ.  
Tyaktvā dehaṁ punarjanma naiti māmeti so'rjuna.**

O Arjuna, one who knows the transcendental nature of my appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains my eternal abode.

The verses of Shri Narsi Bhagat sing the glory of the transcendental and eternal nature of God, who alone can free human beings from every form of worldly misery, helplessness, and spiritual confusion. Such liberation is not possible through materialistic speculation. True serenity is attained only when the intelligence becomes free from all doubts and suspicions regarding

the eternal existence of God. Shri Narsi Bhagat expresses this truth in the following words:

**जीव ने शिव तो कैपाकोचा ए थाया,  
रची परपंच चौद लोक किधा भने नर्सेयो ए ते ज तु',  
एने समर्यथी कै संसिद्धि।**

**Jeev Ne Shiv To Capacocha E Thaya,  
Rachi Parpanch Chaud Lok Kidha  
Bhane Narsaiyo E Te J Tu',  
Ene Samryathi Kai Santsidhya.**

God has created this world of His own Will. He parted the Jeev (human soul) from Shiva (Supreme Generous Soul). So, I, the poet Narsaiyo, announce that you are the same as the Supreme Soul. Those who keep faith in Him, they attain Him. Such pure souls (Punya-Jeevas) live for eternity who experience the invisible omnipresent God. On this divine level, where the devotee feels unison with God, his spiritual odyssey from Nirguna Brahma (the invisible and Impersonal form of God) to Saguna Brahma (the visible and personal form of God) commences.

There are many incidents in the life of Shri Narsi Bhagat that reveal the depth of his complete surrender to the Will of God. With immeasurable trust and unwavering devotion, he placed every aspect of his life at the feet of the Lord. In several such situations, when circumstances seemed impossible and worldly solutions were nowhere to be found, God Himself intervened and resolved the difficulties in miraculous ways. Shri Narsi Bhagat often did not understand how the complex puzzles of his worldly problems were solved, yet he remained firmly convinced that the Lord personally guided and protected him. This divine intervention is beautifully illustrated in the episode of the Mameru ceremony at the house of his daughter Kunwar Bai, which was successfully completed even though Shri Narsi Bhagat did not have a single paisa in his pocket.

Shri Narsi Bhagat also reflects deeply upon the relationship between dream and reality, explaining the co-existence of the ‘Supreme Self’ within the human self.

According to him, the distance between Chitt and Chaitanya (चित्त और चैतन्य) can only be bridged through the understanding of the awakened and the sleeping states of human existence. The soul must possess the courage to struggle against worldly pleasures and temptations. Equipped with the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, the human soul must safeguard the divinity with which it is born. If human life passes without recognizing the true valor and strength of the soul, it is equivalent to living in a state of spiritual dormancy. But once the true Self is realized, life becomes meaningful and truly worth living.

The poet Shri Narsi Bhagat clearly illustrates the distinction between the awakened life and the sleeping life. He explains that when we are awake, we become engrossed in material life and live entirely for worldly matters, thereby forgetting our eternal relationship with the Supreme God. When we fall asleep, we enter the realm of dreams and experience unimaginable pleasures and illusions. The real mystery lies in understanding and differentiating between the Jagrit Awastha (the awakened state) and the Nidraa Awastha (the sleeping state). He further explains that the chitt (the human soul) and the Chaitanya (the Supreme Soul) are essentially one and the same. Chitt represents the finite (Apoorna) aspect, while Chaitanya represents the infinite (Poorna) reality. The finite soul journeys toward the infinite and ultimately arrives at the state of infinite bliss.

Shri Narsi Bhagat’s expression ‘Te J Tu’ (you are the same as the Almighty Supreme Soul) echoes the Vedic declaration ‘Tat Tvam Asi’, instilling deep confidence in the omnipotent God who is elusive yet tangible, invisible yet all-pervading.

It is often believed that powerful imagination and intense faith possess the capacity to manifest themselves in the world of phenomena, where potential energy transforms into kinetic energy. On a deeper philosophical level, Shri Narsi Bhagat suggests that the material world itself is an illusion.

The poetic framework of Shri Narsi Bhagat is founded upon praise, love, faith, and complete surrender to Lord Krishna. His poems frequently employ love as a symbol of total submission to the Divine. They naturally express profound devotion, faith, and surrender toward Lord Krishna. Written with remarkable simplicity and sincerity, these compositions flow effortlessly with the poet's unconditional love for the Lord.

The metaphors, allegories, and symbolic expressions in his poetry are so vivid and precise that a reader or listener is almost carried into a devotional immersion within the ocean of spiritual ecstasy created by the intensely emotional heart of Shri Narsi Bhagat. The heartfelt recitation of these poems has the power to awaken dormant spiritual emotions and transform them into expressions of love and surrender toward the Supreme Being. The poetry of Shri Narsi Bhagat thus produces a deeply transcendental effect. For one who truly understands the purity of his love for the Divine, self-submission (aatm-samarpan) arises naturally and becomes clearly evident.

His poetic collections based upon episodes of his own life include:

Putra Vivah, Mameru, Hundi, Har Same No Pada, Jhari Na Pada, and several other compositions depicting the acceptance of Harijans.

These works narrate incidents from the poet's personal life and demonstrate how he encountered the Divine in various forms and guises. They include numerous miraculous episodes showing how

Narsaiyya's Lord always came to the aid of His devotee in moments of crisis.

There are also several other narrative compositions such as Chaturis, Sudama Charit, Dana Leela, and episodes inspired by the Srimad Bhagwatam. These represent some of the earliest examples of Akhyana, or narrative poetry, in the Gujarati language.

Among his works are fifty-two compositions that resemble the style of Geeta Govinda, portraying the various expressions of love between Radha and Lord Krishna. The Dana Leela poems describe the charming episodes of Lord Krishna collecting his dues (Dana meaning toll, tax, or offering) from the Gopis who were carrying buttermilk to sell in Mathura.

Sudama Charit narrates the famous story of the divine friendship between Lord Krishna and his childhood companion Sudama.

Govinda Gamana (Departure of Govind) describes the episode of Akrura taking Lord Krishna away from Gokul.

Surata Sangrama (the Battle of Love) depicts a symbolic battle of love between Radha and the Gopis on one side and Lord Krishna with his Gwaal Baals on the other.

There are also hundreds of padas describing the Shrangar (beauty) adventures and the divine amorous pastimes of Radha and Lord Krishna, including the Raas Leela. These are often referred to as Songs of Shrangar. Collections such as Rasasahasrapadi and Shrangar Mala belong to this category. Their dominant mood is Shrangar, portraying traditional situations like the classical Nayaka-Nayika Bheda described in Sanskrit Kavya poetics.

## **SAINT RAIDAS (RAVI DAS)**



## Introduction

To love mankind is to love God,” is a profound teaching often expressed by our saints. The saints perceive the presence of God in every living being and regard service to humanity as the highest form of devotion.

The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are often referred to as the **‘Bhakti Yug’ (the Age of Devotion)**. This was a period when powerful Muslim Sultans ruled over large parts of India. Many of these rulers attempted to weaken Sanatan Dharma by destroying temples, suppressing Hindu traditions, and converting people to Islam by force. During such a challenging period in the history of Sanatan Dharma, Mother India was blessed with the birth of numerous saints and spiritual leaders who revived faith and guided the people toward devotion and righteousness. Among these divine personalities were Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramanandacharya, Saint Raidas, Saint Kabir, Saint Namdev, Saint Tukaram, Saint Narsi Mehta, Guru Nanak Dev, Bhakt Soordas, Goswami Tulsi Das, Saint Charan Das, Bhakta Meerabai, Bhakta Sahajo Bai and many others.

This was also an era when social evils had reached their peak. Certain self-proclaimed Brahmins had become more concerned with promoting their own interests than with preserving the true spirit of Sanatan Dharma. They propagated blind beliefs such as rigid caste discrimination and excessive ritualism. At such a time, Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramanandacharya appeared as a guiding light. The followers of the Shri Ramananda Sampraday regard him as an incarnation of Lord Ram. Though born in a Brahmin family, he boldly declared that a person cannot be called a Brahmin merely by birth. Only one who has attained **Brahm-Gyan (self-realization)** truly deserves to be called a Brahmin. Anyone, irrespective of caste, who possesses genuine love for God and realizes the Supreme Truth can be considered a Brahmin.

Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramanandacharya became one of the foremost pioneers of the **Bhakti Movement in North India**. His teachings were influenced by the Nathpanthi ascetics belonging to the Yoga school of Hindu philosophy. His philosophy attempted to harmonize **Advaita Vedanta** with **Vaishnava Bhakti**. He accepted both concepts of worship: **Saguna Brahm**, the worship of God with form, and **Nirguna Brahm**, meditation upon the formless Divine. Consequently, his disciples followed different paths according to their spiritual inclinations. The worship of Saguna Brahm was embraced by saints such as Saint Raidas and Bhakta Meerabai, while the concept of Nirguna Brahm was adopted by Saint Kabir and his followers.

Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda emphasized that austerities, penances, and ascetic practices are meaningless if an individual does not realize God (Vishnu) within oneself. He criticized excessive fasting and empty ritualism, asserting that such practices are futile if they do not inspire inner reflection and understanding of Brahm, the Supreme Being. According to him, even the reading of sacred scriptures is of little value if the reader fails to comprehend the deeper truths conveyed by them. Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda, the founder of the **Shri Ramanandi Sampraday**, accepted disciples without any discrimination based on gender, caste, class, or religion. He was even willing to accept Muslims as disciples, and Saint Kabir is a notable example of this openness.

His principal disciples included Saint Anantanand, Saint Sursuranand, Saint Sukhanand, Saint Naraharidas, Saint Bhavanand, Saint (Bhagat) Pipa, Saint Kabir, Saint Sen, Saint Dhanna, Saint Raidas, Saint Mata Sursuri and Saint Mata Padyawati. Goswami Tulsi Das also belonged to the Shri Ramanandi Sampraday.

Traditionally, the renunciant life within Sanatan Dharma had been rigidly structured around vows of renunciation and abstinence

from sensual pleasures and material attachments. However, the Shri Ramanandi Sampraday offered a different perspective. It challenged the common belief that a Sadhu must necessarily renounce the world entirely to attain spiritual realization. According to this tradition, devotion (Bhakti) itself forms both the path and the goal toward attaining Moksha (liberation). Devotees are not restricted from practicing Bhakti while living in **Grahstha Ashram (householder life)**. They gradually progress along the spiritual path—from attachment and sensual pleasure toward renunciation and self-discipline, and from material pursuits toward spiritual strength. Today, the Shri Ramanandi Sampraday remains the largest order of Hindu renunciants.

The following narrative is an attempt to describe the life of the great saint **Raidas**. His life stands as a powerful example of how one can attain self-realization while living as a householder and at the same time contribute significantly to social reform. Saint Raidas was one of the enlightened disciples of Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda.

Saint Raidas was born into a low-caste (Chamar) family, yet he lived the life of an ascetic despite belonging to a wealthy household. His father, Raghuram, was one of the richest leather traders of that time in the region. However, Saint Raidas renounced material comforts and chose to live a life of simplicity and poverty.

Through his teachings he conveyed the ideals of love, non-violence, and the concept of one universal God. His famous saying, “**Man Changa to Kathauti Mein Ganga**” (“If the mind is pure, the sacred Ganga flows even in a small vessel”), expresses the idea that what truly pleases God is the purity and sincerity of the heart. Rituals alone cannot lead one to God unless they are accompanied by inner purity, innocence, and sincerity. Through his simple poetic language rooted in regional dialects, he taught people not to discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, or social

status. He emphasized living harmoniously not only with fellow human beings but also with animals.

Professor Ian Woolford, Professor of Hindi and Indology at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, remarks that in a time when humanity often finds itself surrounded by darkness, a universal figure such as Saint Raidas emerges to show the path of light.

According to our scriptures, the Lord is pleased when we remember and narrate the sacred lives of saints. On the occasion of **Saint Raidas Jayanti**, let us remember this great saint of Sanatan Dharma and seek his blessings so that we may progress both materially and spiritually. I pray to the Almighty and to Saint Raidas to enlighten us all and guide us on the righteous path.

## Birth and Parents

It was **Phalgun Poornima**, the full-moon day of the Hindu month of Phalguna, sometime in the late fourteenth century. The villagers of **Mandur**, a village near Varanasi, were celebrating the festival of **Holi** with great enthusiasm. In the colony of cobblers within the village, there was an atmosphere of particular joy in the house of **Raghuram**, the chief cobbler of the village. Cobblers from all around had gathered there to greet him.

His wife **Ghurbunia** was busy frying **bharg pakoras**—fried gram flour delicacies prepared with bharg—for the guests. The celebration was lively and cheerful. People were enjoying the festive food and merrily splashing colored water prepared from the flowers of **Teshu (Butea Monosperma)** upon one another.

It was around noon when suddenly a group of soldiers appeared in front of Raghuram's house. They demanded to see Raghuram. He was immediately summoned to appear before the **Durbar (Royal Court)** of the **Sharqui Sultan of Jaunpur**.

At that time, Varanasi was under the rule of the Sharqui Sultan of Jaunpur, one of the most powerful rulers of the period. Even the Lodhi Emperor of Delhi hesitated to challenge him militarily. The Sultan was highly ambitious and constantly aspired to conquer the Delhi kingdom and merge it with his own dominion. Preparations for war against the Lodhi ruler were already underway.

The Sharqui Sultan was known to be harsh and uncompromising. He had destroyed numerous Hindu temples and strongly opposed the practices of Sanatan Dharma. The sudden summons of Raghuram by such a ruler caused great anxiety not only among the cobblers but throughout the village. Nevertheless, Raghuram had no choice but to obey. Disobedience of a royal order could invite severe punishment, even death. With folded hands, he respectfully

surrendered to the soldiers and prepared to leave for Jaunpur, nearly forty miles away.

Raghuram appeared before the Sultan in the royal court the next day. To his surprise, the Sultan welcomed him with a smile. After offering his respectful salutations, Raghuram sat on the floor of the court.

“Raghuram,” the Sultan declared, “we order you to prepare ten thousand pairs of shoes with the assistance of all the cobblers in my kingdom for our soldiers.”

Raghuram bowed respectfully and fell at the Sultan’s feet. In a humble voice he replied, “O Great Emperor, I am but a poor cobbler. Somehow, I manage to support my family by producing and repairing a few hundred pairs of shoes each year. I neither possess the capacity to produce ten thousand pairs nor the financial resources to do so. How can a small cobbler like me fulfill such a command?”

“Do not worry about money,” the Sultan replied. “I order my treasurer to advance you sufficient funds for producing ten thousand pairs of shoes for my soldiers. From today onward every cobbler in my kingdom will work under your supervision and will produce shoes exclusively for the army. You have six months to complete the task.”

The Sultan required these shoes for the vast army he was preparing for his campaign against Delhi.

The Sultan’s command was absolute. It had to be obeyed. Raghuram bowed again before the Sultan. The royal treasurer immediately handed him one hundred gold coins to begin the work.

Raghuram was overwhelmed with happiness. In his entire life he had never even seen a single gold coin, and now he possessed one hundred. He requested the treasurer to provide security so that he could safely carry the money back to his village. The treasurer assigned two heavily armed soldiers to accompany him.

Thus, Raghuram began his journey home with the two soldiers guarding him. His heart was filled with joy, and he felt as though he had suddenly become a royal person. He imagined that by the time he completed the order of ten thousand pairs of shoes, he would become extremely wealthy.

After traveling nearly twenty-five miles, the weather suddenly turned severe. Dark clouds gathered in the sky and strong winds began to blow. Thunder roared, and flashes of lightning illuminated the gloomy landscape. Although storms were not unusual during that season, this one was extraordinary. A powerful storm seemed to be approaching, and soon heavy rain began to pour down.

Raghuram and the soldiers searched desperately for shelter. They noticed a small hut nearby and rushed toward it. Knocking loudly on the door, they requested refuge from the storm. A hermit (Sadhu) opened the door and invited them inside. The travelers felt immense relief. The hermit offered them water and some fruits.

Observing the happiness shining on Raghuram's face, the hermit spoke gently:

“This material happiness is temporary, my friend. Soon you will be blessed with a divine son who will distribute all your wealth among the needy and thus bring salvation to many generations of your family. Always remember:

पूत सपूत तो क्यों धन संचय ।  
पूत कपूत तो क्यों धन संचय ॥

**Poot Sapoot To Kyon Dhan Sanchay.**  
**Poot Kapoot To Kyon Dhan Sanchay.**

If a son is virtuous, why accumulate wealth? He will earn it by his own virtues. And if a son is unworthy, why accumulate wealth? He will waste it anyway.”

Raghuram could not fully understand the mystical words of the hermit, but he was delighted to hear that he would soon be blessed with a son. Though he had been married for many years, he had not yet been blessed with a child. Filled with gratitude, he offered **Dakshina** to the hermit and bowed at his feet.

Time passed happily thereafter. Raghuram soon became not only the richest cobbler in the Jaunpur kingdom but also the chief of the entire cobbler community in the region. His reputation grew, and his business of making and repairing shoes prospered steadily day by day.

## Early Childhood

The full moon day of the month of **Margshirsh** in the late fourteenth century arrived with extraordinary beauty and charm. The season seemed to wear a new splendor, as though nature itself had adorned fresh garments of tender green leaves. Flowers blossomed everywhere, filling the air with their delicate fragrance. Birds sang joyfully upon the branches of trees, dancing in cheerful harmony with the gentle breeze. The sky appeared clear, deep blue, and cloudless. The mustard fields stretched far and wide, resembling a vast golden-yellow blanket spread across the land. Colorful butterflies fluttered gracefully, catching the eyes of every passerby. The pleasant warmth of the day signaled the passing of winter's chill. Everywhere one could hear the sweet sounds of bees, cuckoos, and other birds, creating an atmosphere of delight and serenity. A sense of joy and happiness seemed to fill the hearts of all.

On this beautiful day, **Ghurbunia**, the wife of **Raghuram**, was experiencing intense labor pains. Raghuram immediately sent for the village midwife. Upon hearing the news, many of Raghuram's friends gathered at his house. At that very moment, everyone present witnessed a brilliant light descending from the sky and entering the room where Ghurbunia was in labor. Shortly afterward, the midwife came out and joyfully announced that a son had been born.

Raghuram was overwhelmed with happiness. In gratitude, he removed one of his precious gold rings and presented it to the midwife. He invited all his friends to celebrate the occasion with great enthusiasm and festivity at his home. As the child had been born on a Sunday, he was named **Ravidas** (devotee of the Sun), though within the cobbler community he came to be affectionately known as **Raidas**.

Raidas grew rapidly. By the fourth month, he had already begun to crawl. His mother Ghurbunia was a devoted worshipper of **Lord Ram**. Whenever she offered prayers to the Lord, the little Raidas would crawl toward her and participate in the prayer in his own innocent way. When he was three years old, the first word that emerged from his lips was “**Ram.**”

By the time he reached the age of five, he composed his first couplet:

**राम नाम बिन जो कुछ कहिये, सो सब भ्रम कहाइ।**

**Ram Nam Bin Jo Kuch Kahiye,  
So Sab Bharam Kahai.**

Other than pronouncing the name of the Lord Ram, everything is delusion.

## Education and Marriage

Observing that his son possessed extraordinary intelligence and promise, Raghuram wished to provide him with proper education. When Raidas reached the age of five, Raghuram took him to the village teacher, **Pundit Shardananda**. The teacher was greatly impressed by the radiant and divine personality of the young Raidas and admitted him into his school.

However, shortly afterward, the upper-caste villagers objected to the idea of educating the child of a cobbler. They threatened to withdraw their own children from the school if Raidas continued to study alongside them. Under this pressure, Pundit Shardananda reluctantly yielded to their demands and asked Raidas not to sit with the children of the upper castes. Nevertheless, he promised to teach him separately. Raidas humbly accepted this arrangement and expressed his thoughts through the following couplet:

**ब्राह्मण वैश्य शूद्र और खत्री, डोम चमार मलेख मन सोइ ।  
होइ पुनीत भगवन भजन ते, आपु तारि, तारै कुल दोई ॥**

**Brahmin Baishya Shudra aur Khatri,  
Dom Chamar Malech Man Soi.  
Hoi Puneet Bhagwan Bhajan Te,  
Aapu Taari, Taarai Kul Doi.**

Whether you are Brahmin, Vaishya, Kshatriya (upper castes) or Shudra, Dom, Chamar, Malech (lower castes), one becomes sacred only by chanting the name of the Lord. The one who chants the name of the Lord finds salvation for himself and for his descendants.

While studying under Pundit Shardananda, Raidas developed a deep friendship with the teacher's son, **Atmananda**. After completing their lessons, the two boys would play together for

long hours. Their favorite game was **Hide and Seek**, which they played enthusiastically even into the evening hours.

One day, while playing this game, darkness fell before they could finish. The two friends decided to return the next morning at sunrise to complete the game and then parted for their homes.

Early the next morning, Raidas arrived at the designated place and waited patiently for his friend. However, Atmananda did not appear. Curious and concerned, Raidas went to the house of Pundit Shardananda to find out what had happened. There he found everyone weeping.

He asked the teacher, “What has happened, Guru Ji?”

Pundit Shardananda replied sorrowfully that Atmananda had passed away.

Raidas quietly walked toward the lifeless body of his friend. Gently shaking him, he spoke aloud, “O Atmananda, it is already late morning and you are still sleeping. Wake up so that we may finish the game we started yesterday. You cannot leave without completing the game as you promised.”

As soon as Atmananda heard these words, a miracle occurred. The boy suddenly rose to his feet and said, “O friend, what are you doing here? Let us go quickly to the place where we were playing and finish our game.”

Witnessing this extraordinary event, the entire village was astonished. The villagers realized that Raidas was no ordinary child but a divine soul. They sought his forgiveness and requested him to join the regular class with the other children.

Raidas thereafter began attending the regular classes. However, he soon lost interest in the formal education provided at the school. Instead, he would sit quietly in a corner, continuously chanting the name of **Lord Ram**.

When the teacher asked him to return to his lessons, Raidas responded by composing a few couplets and reciting them to Guru Ji:

**मैं पढ्यो राम का नाम और दूजा नहीं जानूं,  
रर्रा मम्मा चंडी, तीसरा अंक ना आनू ।  
कहा पढावे बावरे और सकल जंजाल,  
भव सागर जमलोक है मोह कौन लगावे पार ॥**

**Mein Padhyo Ram Ka Nam Aur Duja Nahin Janoon,  
Rarra Mammaa Chandi, Teesaro Ank Na Aano.  
Kaha Padhave Bavare Aur Sakal Janjal,  
Bhav Sagar Jamlok Hai Moh Kaun Lagave Par.**

Pundit Ji, I have learned the name of Lord Ram and I do not understand anything else. Apart from the two syllables “Ra” and “Ma,” I know no other word. Why do you wish to teach me knowledge that will entangle me in the worldly ocean of material existence? Such knowledge cannot grant me liberation (Moksha).

After this, Raidas left the school and returned home. His father Raghuram asked him whether he was unwell, since he had come back from school so early. Raidas calmly explained that the type of education offered there was not what he was seeking.

Although Raghuram did not fully understand the mystical words of his son, he remained concerned about his future.

Meanwhile, Raghuram’s business of making and repairing shoes continued to flourish. He was not greatly disappointed by Raidas’s

decision to leave school. Instead, he began teaching his son the skills of his trade. Raidas proved to be highly intelligent and quickly mastered the craft, producing strong and beautifully crafted shoes. However, he had a compassionate heart and frequently gave away the shoes he made to poor people or wandering Sadhus who passed by the shop.

When Raidas was about ten years old, Raghuram decided to perform a religious ceremony for the welfare of his family by worshipping **Mother Lakshmi** through learned Pundits. Since no Pundit was willing to visit the house of a cobbler, the ceremony was arranged on the banks of the **holy river Ganga**.

For this occasion, Raghuram prepared **ten pairs of shoes** as offerings for the Pundits who would conduct the ritual. He informed Raidas about these preparations and kept the shoes aside before leaving early in the morning for the ceremony, instructing his son to take care of the shop until he returned.

Soon after Raidas opened the shop that day, a group of Sadhus happened to pass by, chanting the sacred name of **Lord Ram**. Raidas noticed that these holy men were walking barefoot. Their feet were wounded with cuts and thorns, and blood was seeping from the cracks in their skin. Yet they continued walking, absorbed in devotion to the Lord without caring for their suffering.

Deeply moved by their condition, Raidas invited them into the shop. Coincidentally, the number of Sadhus was exactly ten, and there were ten pairs of shoes left by his father for donation. Without hesitation, Raidas offered each of them a pair of shoes.

One of the Sadhus came close to Raidas, bowed before him, and softly murmured, “Anant is back... Anant is back... Anant is back.”

The other Sadhus were astonished by this unusual behavior and asked him why he was saying such words. The Sadhu then began narrating a story about the past life of Raidas.

Anant, he explained, had once been a highly learned Brahmin in **Kashi**. The disciples of **Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Maharaj** would daily collect **Bhiksha** (alms) from a few Brahmin households in Kashi and share it with their Guru. One day, when the disciples brought Bhiksha and Swami Ji was about to eat, he suddenly sensed a foul smell resembling that of meat. He asked his disciples from which households they had collected the alms.

After meditating for a moment, Swami Ji discovered that the food obtained from the house of **Anant** was impure. He immediately ordered his disciples to bring Anant before him.

When Anant was brought before Swami Ji, the Guru looked at him sternly and rebuked him, saying that it was shameful for a learned Brahmin to indulge in forbidden meat.

“O Brahmin,” Swami Ji said, “having been born into such a sacred family and possessing knowledge of the scriptures and the four Vedas, you have succumbed to the taste of forbidden meat and consumed it regularly. Therefore, I curse you: you shall soon die an accidental death, and in your next birth you will be born in a Shudra family among meat-eaters.”

Anant trembled with fear. Again and again, he fell at the lotus feet of Bhagwan Swami Ji and begged for forgiveness. The hearts of saints are naturally full of compassion. Bhagwan Swami Ji Maharaj, moved by his remorse, said, “O Brahmin, I cannot withdraw my curse. You must bear the consequence of what you have done. Yet, in your next birth, though you shall be born in a Shudra family, you will live the life of a saint. In time, you will become my disciple and illumine the world through your wisdom.”

A few months later, Anant met with an accident and died. He was now reborn as Raidas. This divine child, as blessed by Bhagwan Swami Ji, would one day spread light to the entire world.

After blessing him, the Sadhus departed from the village.

When Raghuram returned and learned that Raidas had given away all ten pairs of shoes to the Sadhus, he became very angry and scolded him harshly.

Raidas said to his father, “O my beloved father, charity should be given only to those who are truly in need. The Brahmins to whom you intended to donate these shoes are wealthy. They can easily afford to buy new shoes for themselves. But these poor Sadhus had no means to do so. They wander across the country in search of God and truth, enduring both heat and cold. They were the ones who truly needed these shoes.”

Raghuram was not satisfied with his son’s answer. He began to worry that one day Raidas would squander away all his wealth in this manner.

A couple of years passed. Raidas was now twelve years old. Raghuram thought that the time had come to arrange his marriage. Child marriage was common in those days. He also hoped that once Raidas had the responsibility of a household upon him, he would begin to understand the value of wealth.

One day, when Raghuram was not feeling well, he ate a light supper and went to bed early. Soon he was overtaken by Nidraadevi, the Goddess of Sleep. In his dream, he saw himself wandering aimlessly through a forest. After some time, he came upon the hermitage of a Sadhu. He was thirsty and hungry, and so he knocked on the door. Yet, considering himself to be of a low caste, he sat quietly in a corner outside, thinking he might not be permitted to enter the hermitage.

The Sadhu came out and invited him inside.

“Maharaj,” said Raghuram humbly, “I belong to the cobbler caste and may not be allowed to enter your hermitage.”

The Sadhu smiled and replied, “You are a human being, my child, and a creation of my Lord. In the eyes of my Lord, no one is high and no one is low. All are equal, so long as they honor one another. Therefore, do not be afraid—come inside. I have been waiting for you for a long time. You have been blessed with a divine son, and now you seek a suitable bride for him. The sakhi named Lona, companion of the divine Mother Amba, has taken birth to become the wife of Raidas. Go and search for her near the temple of Lord Shiva in Kashi.”

Raghuram awoke deeply stirred by this powerful dream and decided that the very next morning he would go to the Kashi Vishwanath temple to search for the girl named Lona.

Early the next morning he reached Kashi Vishwanath temple, which was only a few miles from his home. There he began asking the cobblers gathered nearby whether anyone knew a girl named Lona.

One of the cobblers came forward, saluted him, and said that he lived in a nearby cobbler settlement and that his daughter’s name was Lona. She was then eight years old. He further mentioned that he belonged to the Chimkatiya sub-caste of cobblers.

Raghuram was delighted to hear this, for he too belonged to the same sub-caste. In those days, marriages within the same sub-caste were considered preferable. He told the man that he had a son, Raidas, who was twelve years old, and that he was searching for a suitable bride for him. He further said that a Sadhu had informed him that Raidas was destined to marry a girl named Lona who

lived near Kashi Vishwanath Mandir, and that was why he had come looking for her.

Lona's father bowed before Raghuram and said, "O Chief, how fortunate I am that you have chosen my daughter Lona as your daughter-in-law. Please accept her according to your will."

Soon thereafter, Raidas and Lona were married.

**बाल रैदास को कीनो विवाह पिताह,  
बड़ो भयो देखि कर्म नित कहो खत कर खाय ।**

**Bal Raidas Ko Keeno Vivah Pitah,  
Bado Bhayo Dekhi Karm Nit Kaho Khat Kar Khay.**

The boy Raidas was married by his father. (Though his father thought that he would change after marriage) His behaviour (his diligence to the Sadhus) remained same as it was before marriage.

In due course of time, he also became the father of a son named Vijay Das.

Lona Devi was completely devoted to her husband. Every word that fell from his lips was, for her, a command to be obeyed. Seeing that both husband and wife seemed determined to give away his hard-earned wealth, Raghuram became increasingly angry. He tried in every possible way to teach them the value of money, but all his efforts proved fruitless.

**पिता त्रास देबहूँ समझावें, करनी करि कछु ना कमावें ।  
बहू आदर कर संत बोलावे। मिले जो घर में सब भुगतावें ॥**

**Pita Tras Debahun Samjhaven,  
Karni Kari Kachu Naa Kamaven.  
Bahu Adar Kar Sant Bolaven,  
Mile Jo Ghar Mein Sab Bhugtawein.**

Father tried all the ways and even scolded his son and daughter-in-law to teach the value of the money, but in vain. Raidas was not making full use of his parental skills to earn the money. Daughter-in-law would invite Sadhus with great respect and whatever she had, would donate to these Sadhus.

Raghuram then convened a meeting of his close relatives to discuss the behavior of his son and daughter-in-law and sought their advice on how best to make them understand the value of wealth. All of them unanimously said that Raidas had been born amidst abundance and had never known want. Since he had grown up surrounded by the wealth earned by his father, he could not understand its worth. They advised that he would only realize the value of money and how difficult it is to earn when he was separated from the family and left to support himself without financial aid.

With a very heavy heart, thinking of the future welfare of his son, Raghuram accepted their advice and asked Raidas and his daughter-in-law to leave the house and earn their own livelihood.

Raidas was deeply saddened by the behavior of his father and the other relatives.

**नरहरी प्रगटसि ना हो, प्रगटसि ना हो दीन दयाल,  
जन मत ही तै बिगरे, हों कुछ बुझत बहुरि सयान ।  
परिवार बिमुखी मोह लागि, कुछ समझ परतु नहीं जानि ॥**

**Nahari Pragatasi Na Ho,  
Pragatsi Na Ho Deen Dayaal.  
Jan Mat Hee Tai Bigrai,  
Hon Kuch Bujhat Bahuri Sayaan.  
Parivaar Bimukhi Moh Laagi,  
Kuch Samajh Paratu Nahin Jaani.**

O Lord, why do you not appear and console me. All the family members think I am a spoiled child. I am completely confused and do not know what to do?

When his childhood friend Atmananda heard of this, he immediately came running to him and offered every possible help. He even invited Raidas to come and live with his family. But Raidas would not agree, saying that Atmananda himself would then be outcast by his Brahmin community. At last, Atmananda helped him build a small hut in the backyard of his father's large house, and there Raidas began living with his wife and son.

**बड़ो भयो तब न्यारा कीनो, बांटे अवे सो बाँटि ना दीनो ।  
रखो पिता के पछिवारे, कछु ना कहो रैदास बिचारे ॥**

**Bado Bhayo Tab Nyaraa Keeno,  
Baante Awe So Baanti Na Deeno.  
Rakho Pita Ke Pachivare,  
Kachu Na Kaho Raidas Bichare.**

Father ordered Raidas to leave his house and did not give him any money. Poor Raidas, without uttering a single word, started living in a hut in the backyard of the house of his father.

Raidas then began earning his living by making and repairing shoes. He worked only enough to provide for the basic needs of his family. The rest of his time he dedicated to chanting the holy

name of Lord Ram. Each day he would make at least one pair of shoes to give freely to some poor person or wandering Sadhu.

Thus, Raidas continued to live in poverty, but he never asked for help from his parents or from anyone else. Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji was observing all this very carefully. To test the steadfastness and truthfulness of Raidas, he one day sent one of his disciples, disguised as a Sadhu, carrying a Parasmani stone—a stone said to turn iron into gold by mere touch.

The disguised Sadhu came to Raidas's hut. Raidas welcomed him warmly and offered him the best hospitality he could. The next morning, as the Sadhu prepared to depart, he handed the Parasmani to Raidas and said that it was a precious stone and he feared it might be stolen while he wandered from place to place. He requested Raidas to keep it safe and return it when he came back from his travels.

Raidas accepted the stone, understood its value, and simply tucked it away into one corner of his grass-thatched roof.

After a year, when Swami Ramananda Ji sent the disciple back to see whether Raidas had used the Parasmani to create wealth, he found him living in exactly the same poverty as before. He asked Raidas about the stone and why he had not used it.

Raidas replied, “O Sadhu, greed is not good. Why should I create more wealth when the Lord gives me enough each day to support my household satisfactorily? Please take back your precious Parasmani. I have no need for it.”

Two years had now passed since Raghuram had separated Raidas from the family. Those two years had been very painful for both Raghuram and Ghurbunia. Raidas was their only and deeply beloved son. Raghuram had always imagined that Raidas would soon return, apologize, and come back home. He thought he would

then embrace him and teach him the value of wealth. But that never happened. Though poor, Raidas remained content and showed no attachment toward his father's riches.

Ghurbunia could no longer bear the separation. She fell ill and insisted that she must go and live with her son Raidas, her daughter-in-law Lona, and her grandson Vijay Das. Raghuram could not oppose her. One day Ghurbunia went to the hut of Raidas to stay there. When Lona saw her mother-in-law arrive, she fell at her feet and welcomed her with all her heart. Thus Ghurbunia began living with her son and daughter-in-law.

Soon afterward, Raghuram too came to realize that it was not wealth but family that truly mattered. He came to Raidas in the hut and asked him to return to the house. But Raidas, with folded hands, respectfully requested his father instead to distribute all his wealth among the poor and come live with him in the hut.

At last, Raghuram fully understood his son. As Raidas had advised, he distributed all his wealth to the poor and needy. Thereafter he began participating in the chanting of the holy name of Lord Ram and in the daily Satsang of Raidas. In a sense, he became a disciple of his own son.

Mother Ghurbunia, however, did not live long after this. She departed for her heavenly abode in the arms of her son Raidas. The death of his beloved wife shattered the heart of Raghuram, and soon he too followed her to the heavenly world.

After the death of his parents, Raidas continued to live in his small hut, while the house of his parents was converted into a guest house for visiting Sadhus. The fame of Raidas increased day by day. His daily Satsang drew ever-growing crowds. Not only Dalits and people of the lower castes, but people of all castes began to gather to listen to the teachings of Raidas.

## Deeksha from Bhagwan Swami Ramananda

Bhagwan Swami Ramanandacharya was the most revered saint and Guru of Sanatan Dharma in that age. He was worshipped by many as an incarnation of Lord Ram. Great saintly personalities such as Saint Kabir, Saint Dhanna, and many others had already become his disciples. In the heart of Raidas, there always remained one deep yearning—that if Bhagwan Swami Ramananda would shower His grace upon him and accept him as His disciple, then his human birth would be truly sanctified. Yet, being born in a so-called lower caste, he hesitated and feared that Bhagwan Swami Ramananda might not accept him.

Then his mind turned toward Saint Kabir. He reflected that when Bhagwan Swami Ramananda had accepted Saint Kabir, who was born in a Muslim family, there might still be hope for him as well. With this thought, one day he went to meet Saint Kabir. By that time, the fame of Raidas as a great devotee of Lord Ram had already reached the ears of Saint Kabir. The moment Saint Kabir heard that Raidas had come to his home, he ran forward to receive him and welcomed him with open arms and a full heart. Raidas, who regarded Saint Kabir as an elder brother and as worthy of the same reverence as a Guru, bowed at his feet and received his blessings.

**तब रैदास बिचारी बाता, गुरु सामान कबीर बड़े भ्राता ।**

**Tab Raidas Bicharee Bata,  
Guru Saman Kabir Bade Bhrata.**

Raidas thought in his mind that Kabir is like his older brother and equal to Guru.

Raidas then opened his heart before Saint Kabir and expressed his desire to become a disciple of Bhagwan Swami Ramananda. Saint

Kabir gladly welcomed this noble wish, and together they proceeded to the Ashram of Bhagwan Swami Ramanandacharya.

On beholding the holy and radiant personality of Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Maharaj, Raidas bowed at His sacred feet and offered his humble obeisance. Saint Kabir then explained to Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji the purpose of Raidas's visit. Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Maharaj already knew the past life of Raidas and had been inwardly protecting him from the time of his birth. With great joy, He accepted Raidas as His disciple and declared that from that day onward Raidas would be known as Saint Raidas.

**रामानंद मोहि गुरु मिल्यो, पायो ब्रह्म विसास ।  
राम नाम अमि रास पियो, रैदास भयो पलास ॥**

**Ramananda Mohi Guru Milyo, Payo Brahm Visas.  
Ram Naam Ami Ras Piyo, Raidas Bhayo Palaas.**

I found Ramananda as my Guru who gave me the knowledge of divinity. By chanting the great name of Lord Ram, which is like sweet mango, I became sanctified.

When the Brahmins of Kashi heard that Bhagwan Swami Ramananda had accepted Raidas as His disciple and had honored him with the title of "Saint," they assembled together in a meeting and unanimously objected to the decision. In their view, a person born in a lower caste was unworthy of being accepted as a disciple by Bhagwan Swami Ramananda. Therefore, they approached Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Maharaj as a group and protested against His decision.

Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Maharaj smiled and said, "O Brahmins, all of you claim to have been born in sacred Brahmin families, yet none among you is as close to holiness, wisdom,

spiritual knowledge, and devotion to the Lord as Saint Raidas. If you wish, I permit you to test this truth in any manner you choose, so that you may be fully satisfied with the greatness of Saint Raidas.”

The Brahmins accepted this challenge. After much discussion among themselves, they devised a test for Saint Raidas. Considering themselves holy and spiritually powerful, they consecrated an idol of Lord Ram with divine mantras. They believed that such an enchanted idol, when cast into the sacred waters of Mother Ganga, would float because of its divine power and would not sink. They then asked Saint Raidas whether he too could consecrate an idol of Lord Ram in such a way that it would remain afloat in the waters of Mother Ganga.

Saint Raidas was unwilling to accept such a challenge. With great humility he said, “O learned Brahmins, my Guru Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Maharaj has taught me that whoever loves the Lord from the depths of the heart surely finds Him. Praying to the Lord, participating in Satsang, and organizing Satsang are not the rights of Brahmins alone. Anyone who truly loves the Lord may engage in these acts. Such love arises in the heart of a devotee only by the Will of the Lord. I love my idol, my Saligram of Lord Ram. You too love your own idols of the Lord. Therefore, let me pray to my Lord, and let all of you pray to yours. We should not subject the Lord to such a test.”

Then one of the Brahmins replied that this matter had already been discussed with Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Maharaj and that He had given permission for the test. Hearing that his Guru had approved it, Saint Raidas bowed to the will of his Guru and agreed.

He said to the Brahmins, “First let all of you cast your consecrated idol into the holy waters of Mother Ganga. If it floats and does not sink, I shall accept defeat and never again chant the name of the Lord. I shall also cease to call myself a disciple of Bhagwan Swami

Ramananda. But if your idol sinks, then I shall place my own idol, Lord Saligram, into the holy waters of Mother Ganga, and we shall see whether my devotion to the Lord and the blessings of my Guru Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji are honored by the Lord.”

Accordingly, the Brahmins cast their consecrated idol into the sacred stream of Mother Ganga. But the idol sank immediately. Then Saint Raidas, chanting the name of the Lord and meditating on the holy feet of his Guru Swami Ramananda Ji, gently placed his own idol, Lord Saligram, into the waters of Mother Ganga. It floated.

On witnessing this miracle, all the Brahmins felt deeply ashamed. They begged forgiveness from Saint Raidas, and from that day onward they accepted him as a true saintly person.

**बपुरा संत रैदास कहै रे,  
ज्ञान विचारी चरण चित लवे, हरी को सरणी रहे रे,  
पाती तोड़ें पूजी रचावें तारण तरन कहे रे ।  
मूरति मांहि बसैं परमेश्वर, तो पानी मांहीं तरे रे ।  
झूठे माया जग दहकाया, तो निताप दहे रे ॥**

**Bapura Sant Raidas Kahai Re.  
Gyan Vichari Charan Chit Lave,  
Hari Ko Sarani Rahe Re.  
Paati Toden Pooji Rachaven  
Taaran Taran Kahe Re.  
Moorati Maanhi Basen Parmeshwar,  
To Paani Maahin Tare Re.  
Jhoonthen Maya Jag Dahkaya,  
To Nitap Dahe Re.**

By chanting the name of the Lord and meditating on the holy feet of the Guru in the heart, one can swim over even the materialistic ocean of this world, not only in Mother Ganga. The Lord Himself

was present in the Idol, hence it floated. Having false pretence and deceiving in any way, would not bring any good to you.

After receiving Diksha from Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Maharaj, Saint Raidas returned to his home. He continued to worship the Almighty and preach to gatherings about the glory of the Divine Name.

जनम जाती कूँ छोडकर, करनी जान प्रधान ।  
इहो वेद को धर्म है, कहे रैदास बखान ॥  
ब्राह्मण खत्री वैश्य सूद्र, रैदास जनम ते नाँहि ।  
जो चाहे सुबरन कौ, पावहि कर्मन माहिँ ।  
रैदास जनम के कारण, होत ना कोई नीच ।  
नर कूँ नीची करि डारि है, ओछे करम की कीच ॥

**Janam Jaati Koon Chodikar, Karnee Jaan Pradhan.  
Ihyo Ved Ko Dharm Hai, Kahe Raidas Bakhan.  
Brahmin Khatri Baish Sood, Raidas Janam Te Naanhin.  
Jo Chahe, Subaran Kau, Paawahin Karman Maahin.  
Raidas Janam Ke Kaaran, Hot Na Koi Neech.  
Nar Koon Nichi Kari Daari Hai, Oche Karam Kee Keech.**

Do not give any importance to the caste of a person in which he or she is born. Always give importance to deeds (Karm). No one is Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, or Shudra by birth. One receives the results in life—whether sorrow or happiness—according to one's deeds. Saint Raidas says that no one is low because of caste; only bad deeds, like mud, make a person low.

## **For A Bliss Heart, Everywhere Is Ganga**

It was a beautiful morning in the month of Chaitra in the early fifteenth century. The sun shone brightly in the clear blue sky. A cool and fragrant breeze moved gently through the air. Saint Raidas was seated in front of his hut, carefully making a pair of shoes for the son of the village Sarpanch, Shri Ram Prakash Singh. The Sarpanch's son, Master Anant Prakash Singh, was to be married that very day. The Sarpanch had humbly requested Saint Raidas to prepare a pair of shoes for him, believing that wearing them during the marriage ceremony would bring him the blessings of the saint. Saint Raidas had promised to complete and deliver the pair by midday.

At that time, Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma, a Brahmin of the village, came to Saint Raidas with a request to repair his shoes. The shoes were torn so badly that he could hardly walk properly in them. He was on his way to take a holy bath in Mother Ganga. Saint Raidas took the damaged shoes from his hands and repaired them. In return, Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma offered him a quarter coin as remuneration.

Saint Raidas accepted the coin, but immediately returned it to him with folded hands, requesting that it be offered to Holy Mother Ganga on his behalf. Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma then invited Saint Raidas to come personally with him to the banks of Mother Ganga, bathe in the sacred river, and offer the coin himself.

Saint Raidas replied gently, "O pious Brahmin, I have promised to deliver this pair of shoes by midday to Sarpanch Shri Ram Prakash Singh for his son, Master Anant Prakash Singh, who is to be married this evening. I would have been glad indeed to accompany you to the holy banks of Mother Ganga, take a sacred bath there, and offer this coin with my own hands. But regrettably, I cannot go now. Moreover, my Guru Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji has taught me:"

## मन चंगा तो कठोती में गंगा ।

### **Man Changa to Kathoti Mein Ganga.**

If there is a happiness in the heart, then Mother Ganga resides everywhere even in the 'Platter'.

“Please do me this favor and offer this coin to Holy Mother Ganga on my behalf. When I am free, I shall go myself to the Ghaat and beg forgiveness of the Mother.”

Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma gladly agreed to offer the quarter coin to Holy Mother Ganga on behalf of Saint Raidas.

He then proceeded to the Ghaat of Mother Ganga and took his holy bath. Uttering the sacred words, “Har Har Gange,” he offered the quarter coin of Saint Raidas into the waters of Mother Ganga. At that very moment, a miracle took place. Mother Ganga manifested in person and accepted the offering with Her own hands. In return, She gave the Brahmin a golden, jewel-studded bangle and instructed him to present it to Saint Raidas as a return gift.

Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma was stunned beyond measure. Bowing before the Divine Mother, he received the bangle. But as soon as he emerged from the holy waters of Mother Ganga, greed overcame his mind. He began to think that if he sold this golden, jewel-studded ornament, he would obtain enough wealth to spend the rest of his life in comfort and luxury. With this thought, he went to the city goldsmith and sold the bangle to him.

The bangle was extraordinarily beautiful. It was studded with precious jewels and radiated an otherworldly brilliance. The goldsmith, upon seeing its rare beauty, thought that only Raja Virbhan Singh, the Mansabdar of the State, could truly appreciate

such a divine ornament and purchase it for the right price. Therefore, he approached Raja Virbhan Singh.

Raja Virbhan Singh was astonished when he saw the bangle. Never before had he laid eyes upon such a beautiful and radiant ornament. He immediately purchased it at a high price and presented it to his queen. But when the queen saw that divine ornament, she was not satisfied with just one bangle. She desired another exactly like it so that she could wear one on each wrist. She therefore requested Raja Virbhan Singh to procure another similar bangle from the same goldsmith.

The Raja at once ordered his soldiers to bring the goldsmith to the court. When the goldsmith appeared before him, the Raja commanded him to prepare another bangle of exactly the same beauty and divine brilliance.

The goldsmith fell at the feet of Raja Virbhan Singh and humbly said, “O Lord, I possess no such skill as to create an ornament of this beauty and divinity. I purchased it from a Brahmin by the name of Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma. I shall ask him to obtain another from the same source for you.”

The goldsmith then went to Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma and informed him of the Raja’s decree—that he must produce another similar bangle or face punishment. Poor Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma, trembling with fear, appeared in the court of the Raja with folded hands and confessed the entire truth. He said that only Saint Raidas would be able to obtain another such divine bangle through his prayer to Mother Ganga.

Thereupon, Raja Virbhan Singh and Shri Shanti Prasad Sharma went together to the humble hut of Saint Raidas. Saint Raidas honored the Raja appropriately, bowed before him, and humbly asked what service he could render. The Raja requested him to

pray to Mother Ganga for another divine bangle like the one She had previously given.

Saint Raidas then meditated upon Mother Ganga and came to know the whole truth inwardly. He said, "O Rajan, why trouble the Great Mother over such a small matter? Please be seated."

Then he placed his hand into his kathauti, and lo and behold, when he drew it out, there was another identical bangle in his hand.

The Raja wished to pay him the price of the ornament. But Saint Raidas replied, "O Rajan, Mother Ganga did not charge me anything for Her gift. How then can I ask any price from you?"

The delighted Raja returned to his palace and presented the second bangle to his queen. This incident left a deep and lasting impression upon the mind of Raja Virbhan Singh. From that time onward, he revered Saint Raidas as a holy person and regarded him as equal to his Guru.

This miracle established Saint Raidas as a greatly revered and respected saint throughout the State of Kashi. Saint Kabir said:

**साधुन में रैदास संत है, सुपच ऋषि सो मनिया ।  
हिन्दू तुर्क दोई दीन बने हैं, कुछ नहीं पहचानिया ॥**

**Sadhun Mein Raidas Sant Hei,  
Supach Rishi So Maniya.  
Hindu Turk Doi Deen Bane Hein,  
Kuch Naheen Pahachaniyaa.**

Among the holy persons, Raidas is the great Saint. Consider him like Rishi (Sage). Whether you are a Hindu or a Muslim, if you do not understand this, you are an unfortunate person.

## **Guru of Queen Jhali and Mirabai of Chittor**

Once Queen Jhali, the wife of the great Maharaja Rana Sanga of Chittor, came on a holy pilgrimage to Kashi. By that time, Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji had become very old. The queen desired to receive Brahm-Gyan from him. Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji Maharaj asked her to go instead to one of his disciples—either Saint Kabir or Saint Raidas—to fulfill her spiritual aspiration.

She first went to Saint Kabir and conveyed to him the instruction of Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji Maharaj. Out of obedience to his Guru's command, Saint Kabir was willing to impart Brahm-Gyan to her, but he requested her to wait for some time, as he was then deeply engaged in important social work. Unfortunately, Queen Jhali had very limited time, for she was soon required to return to her kingdom of Chittor. Saint Kabir therefore directed her to go to Saint Raidas and instructed one of his disciples to lead her to him.

As directed by Saint Kabir, Queen Jhali then went to the hut of Saint Raidas along with the disciple. The moment she beheld Saint Raidas, she was deeply enchanted by his divine personality and bowed before him with great reverence. This was highly unusual, for Queen Jhali was no ordinary queen. She was a great Kshatriya queen of high standing in all India, the wife of the illustrious Rana Sanga of Chittor. At the time of her arrival, Saint Raidas was engaged in delivering a discourse to his followers in his native village. She listened to the discourse and became so absorbed in his devotion, wisdom, and spiritual radiance that she decided to remain in the village for a few more days in order to hear his teachings daily.

So deeply was she impressed by the wisdom and devotion of Saint Raidas that she approached him with a request that he accept her as his disciple. Saint Raidas graciously accepted her and imparted

to her Brahm-Gyan. Thus, her heart fulfilled and her longing for spiritual knowledge satisfied, she prepared to return to her kingdom. Before leaving, she invited Saint Raidas to visit Chittor.

This incident once again stirred great jealousy among the Brahmins of Kashi.

**बसत चित्तोर माँझ रानी एक झाली नाम,  
नाम बिन कान खली आनि शिष्य भाई है ।  
संग हेतु विप्रो सुनी शिप्रा तनु आग लागि,  
भागी मति नृप भीड़ सब आगे गयी है ॥**

**Basat Chittor Maanjh Rani Ek Jhali Naam,  
Naam Bin Kaan Khali Aani Shishya Bhayee Hai.  
Sang Hetu Vipru Suni Chipra Tanu Aag Laagi,  
Bhagee Mati Nrap Bheer Sab Aagein Gayee Hai.**

When the Brahmins heard that Queen Jhali of Chittor had accepted Saint Raidas as her Guru, they became intensely jealous. They gathered together and went to the king of Kashi to lodge a complaint against Saint Raidas.

The Pundits of Kashi were always searching for an opportunity to insult and dishonor Saint Raidas. They could not bear the thought that a man born in a so-called lower caste, a Chamar, could impart Brahm-Gyan to such a highly honored Kshatriya queen as Jhali. In their view, the right to bestow such divine knowledge belonged by birth only to them. They argued that according to Sanatan Dharma, only holy and revered Brahmins were entitled to become Gurus and impart divine wisdom to others, including kings and queens. Saint Raidas, they claimed, was neither holy nor worthy of reverence because he belonged to a Shudra caste. Therefore, according to them, he was polluting Sanatan Dharma and deserved punishment.

**अपूज्याः यन्त्र पूज्यं पज्या पूजाव्यतिक्रमात् ।  
त्र्यस्रात्र प्रवर्तन्ते दुर्भिक्षं मरणं भयं ॥**

**Apoojyaah Yantra Poojyant  
Pajya Poojavyatikramaat.  
Tryastratra Pravarttante  
Durbhiksham Maranam Bhayam.**

Where the unworthy are honoured, and the truly deserving are insulted or disrespected, the divine law of balance responds quickly. Such imbalance invites severe punishment from fate or divine forces.

Raja Virbhan Singh had already witnessed the miraculous powers of Saint Raidas and regarded him as a supremely holy and venerable person. He was unwilling to entertain the absurd demand of the Pundits that such a saint be punished. However, the Pundits, supported by other high-caste men of the State, remained adamant. Therefore, the Raja devised an alternative.

He declared that the Pundits should engage Saint Raidas in a Shastraarth, a scriptural and religious debate. If the Pundits won, then Saint Raidas would be punished according to their wishes. But if Saint Raidas emerged victorious, then they would be obliged to honor him as a great saint and publicly acknowledge his spiritual superiority by carrying him upon their shoulders through the streets of Kashi.

Confident in their scriptural learning, the Pundits accepted the challenge.

Raja Virbhan Singh then invited both Saint Raidas and the Pundits to his court for the Shastraarth. The debate continued for an entire week. Many times it seemed that Saint Raidas had clearly gained

the upper hand, yet the Pundits refused to accept defeat. There appeared to be no end to the discussion.

At last, Raja Virbhan Singh proposed another way to conclude the matter. He ordered his Pujari to bring to the court the idol of Lord Vishnu from his personal shrine. When the idol was brought into the Darbar, the Raja addressed both sides and said that each—Saint Raidas and the Pundits—should invoke Lord Vishnu and attempt to draw Him from the shrine into their laps. Whichever side succeeded in attracting Lord Vishnu into its lap would be declared the winner.

Both the Pundits and Saint Raidas agreed to this suggestion.

The Pundits began reciting sacred hymns from the Vedas and other scriptures, praying to Lord Vishnu to leave the shrine and come into their laps. Yet all their efforts proved fruitless. The entire day passed, but Lord Vishnu did not move from the shrine. At last, they were compelled to accept defeat. Then Saint Raidas began to pray to Lord Vishnu through his devotional songs.

ऐसी लाज लाल तुम बिन कौन करे ।  
गरीब निवाज़ गुसैयाँ मेरे मत्थे छतर धरे ॥  
जाकी छोटी जगत कौ लागू ता पार तुम्हीं धरे ।  
नीचहुँ ऊँच करे मेरा गोबिंद काहू ते न डरे ॥  
नामदेव कबीर तिलोचन साधना सें तेरे ।  
कहे रैदास सुनहु रे संत अहु हरि जीतेउ समय सारे ॥

Eisee Laaj Laal Tum Bin Kaun Kare.  
Ghareeb Niwaz Gusaiyaan Mere Matthe Chatar Dhare.  
Jaaki Choti Jagat Kau Laagun Taa Paar Tumheen Dhare.  
Neechahun Oonch Kare Mera Gobind Kahu Te Na Dare.  
Namdev Kabir Tilochan Sadhana Sein Tare.  
Kahe Raidas Sunau Re Sant Ahu Hari Jitau Samay Sare.

‘O Lord, who can be kinder than You. You are the Lord of poor persons. Please decorate my head with crown of win. For those who are defenceless, You defend them. O my Govind, You are fearless and capable of turning a mole into mountain. Saints like Namdev, Kabir and Tilochan have got Your blessings through their devotion. Raidas says that O Saints, by blessings of the Lord, anything is possible.’

**वैसे ही सिंहासन पै आइये के बिराजें प्रभु,  
पढ़े वेद वानी पै आये यह नहीं हैं ।  
पतित पावन हूजिए प्रगट आज,  
गाई पद गोद आई बैठे भक्त लाई है ॥**

**Vaise He Sinhasan Pai Aaiyee Kai Biraajein Prabhu,  
Padhe Ved Vaanee Pai Aaye Yeh Nai Hai.  
Patit Paawan Hoojiye Pragat Aaj,  
Gaayee Pad God Aayee Baithe Bhakt Layee Hai.**

O Lord, You are seated on the Shrine. You did not leave the Shrine even Pundits chanted Mantras from Veds. O Purifier of the fallen, please appear and sit on my laps.

As Saint Raidas recited these couplets and meditated upon Lord Vishnu, a miracle occurred. The idol of Lord Vishnu began to move from the shrine and came to rest upon the lap of Saint Raidas.

Saint Raidas was then declared the victor by Raja Virbhan Singh. The Raja himself came before Saint Raidas, bowed reverentially, and received blessings by touching the saint's holy feet. Thereafter, the Pundits had no choice but to carry Saint Raidas upon their shoulders and move through the streets of Kashi, proclaiming his victory and acknowledging him as a great, holy, wise, and exalted devotee of the Lord.

As mentioned earlier, Queen Jhali had invited Saint Raidas to Chittor. Initially, Saint Raidas was not willing to leave his native village and travel there. One fine morning, however, he received a visitor—none other than Saint Kabir himself. The moment Saint Raidas heard the voice of Saint Kabir calling from the street, he ran out barefoot and bowed to him with deep reverence. Saint Kabir was not only his Guru-bhai, but one whom he honored like an elder brother. Saint Raidas respectfully welcomed him into his home. He worshipped him and seated him upon an elevated platform, the very place usually reserved for the image of Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji Maharaj, his Guru. After offering light refreshment of fruits and milk, Saint Kabir blessed Saint Raidas and requested him to go to Chittor and bless the royal family there.

Saint Raidas accepted the instruction of Saint Kabir and decided to travel to Chittor with his wife Lona and his son Vijay Das.

**आज्ञा ले कबीर की, पुनि हरि आज्ञा लीन ।  
रमन मतो चित्तोर को, जन रैदास तब कीन ॥**

**Agyaa le Kabir Ki, Puni Hari Agyaa Leen.  
Raman Mato Chittor Ko, Jan Raidas Tab Keen.**

On receiving orders from Saint Kabir, and taking permission from the Lord, Saint Raidas made up his mind to go to Chittor.

Though it was the spring season of the early sixteenth century, the morning on which Saint Raidas reached Chittor was extremely cold. Queen Jhali was sitting in her chamber before a fire, warming herself, when a maid came running to inform her that a poor, beggar-like man, accompanied by his wife and son, was standing at the palace gate and asking for her. The maid added that they were shivering with cold and did not even possess enough clothing to protect themselves. The man, she said, called himself Raidas.

The moment Queen Jhali heard the name “Raidas,” she rushed toward the gate of the palace just as she was, still clothed in her sleeping gown. There she bowed at the feet of her Guru and was deeply shaken to see the impoverished condition of him and his family. She immediately ordered warm clothes to be brought for them and escorted them to the royal guest house reserved for the most honored guests of the king and queen. Tears filled her eyes as she thought of the hardship her Guru and his family had endured merely to honor her invitation. Saint Raidas gently consoled her and requested her not to grieve. He told her that he had come to Chittor only because he had been commanded by his Guru-bhai Saint Kabir and by the Lord.

Two days had now passed since Saint Raidas and his family had arrived in Chittor from Kashi and had been lodged with honor in the palace. On one such day, Saint Raidas was singing his devotional couplets in a melodious voice:

आओ आओ हे देवाधिदेव मैं तुम्हरी शरण आयो ।  
सकल सुख के मूल, जाके नहीं सम तूल, सो चरण मूल पायो ॥  
बिबिध जोनी वास, पर पायो त्रास,  
तुम्हरे भजन बिन भ्रमित फिरयो ।  
माया मोह काम विषय, लम्पट निकाम यह, दुस्तर भव तरयो ॥  
तुम्हरे नाम सुमिरन बिन, संसारी धर मन टरियो ।  
रैदास दास की सेवा मान देव, पतित पावन आज प्रगट हुइयो ॥

**Aao Aao He Devahidev  
Main Tumharee Sharan Aayo.  
Sakal Sukh Ke Mool  
Jaake Naheen Sam Tool,  
So Charan Mool Paayo.  
Bibidh Joni Vaas, Par Paayoi Tras,  
Tumhare Bhajan Bin Bhramit Phiryo.  
Maya Moh Kaam Vishay,  
Lampat Nikaam Yeh,**

**Dustar Bhav Taryo.  
Tumhare Naam Sumiran Bin,  
Sansaari Dharam Na Tariyo.  
Raidas Daas Ki Sevaa Maa Dev,  
Patit Paawan Aaj Pragat Hooiyo.**

O Lord of all Gods and Goddesses, I seek Your shelter. O Lord, You are the one who gives happiness. No one is equal to You. I fall at Your Holy Feet. I have taken birth in various forms of lives (Yonies) in my previous births, and have now realised that without your devotion, we live in a world of delusion. Because I have been involved in sins such as attraction to the materialistic things, it has been difficult for me to get salvation. Without chanting Your Holy Name, the attraction towards materialistic things cannot be destroyed. O Lord, accept the humble service of this slave Raidas, and by showing mercy on me, prove that You are the one who purifies the sinner (Patit Paawan) and appear before me.

Mirabai, the daughter-in-law of Queen Jhali, heard this melodious Bhajan and was irresistibly drawn toward the singer. Curious to know who this saint was, whose voice carried such deep devotion, she inquired and learned that he was Saint Raidas, the Guru of her mother-in-law, Queen Jhali. At once she ran to her mother-in-law and begged to be introduced to him.

Mirabai had been married to Kunwar Bhoj Raj, the crown prince of Chittor, and was thus the daughter-in-law of the great Maharana Sanga of Chittor. From her childhood she had been a devoted lover of Lord Krishna, having received deep influence from her grandfather, who too was a great devotee of the Lord. Even after her marriage, though she belonged to the royal household, she continued to spend most of her time in devotion to Lord Krishna.

Unfortunately, Kunwar Bhoj Raj had been seriously wounded in a battle against the Sultan of Delhi in 1516, and after a long illness he passed away in 1521. He had been deeply fond of Mirabai and

had always encouraged her devotion to Lord Krishna. Though Mirabai's world had been shattered by the death of her husband, she continued to receive protection and affection from her father-in-law, the great Rana Sanga, and from her mother-in-law, Queen Jhali. After Rana Sanga himself fell in the Battle of Khanwa in 1527, Vikramjit Singh became the ruler of Chittor. The new king disliked Mirabai, considering her a blemish upon the dignity of the royal house. Yet because she remained under the protection of Queen Jhali, there was little he could do against her.

The deaths of Bhoj Raj and then of Maharana Sanga had plunged both Queen Jhali and Mirabai into deep sorrow. In such a dark period, the arrival of Guru Raidas came to Queen Jhali like a ray of light at the end of a tunnel.

Queen Jhali introduced Saint Raidas to Mirabai. Mirabai, too, became deeply absorbed in the divine personality of Saint Raidas and, like Queen Jhali before her, begged him to accept her as his disciple. Saint Raidas graciously fulfilled her request as well.

**गुरु मिलया रैदास जी दीनी ज्ञान की गुटकी ।  
चोट लगी निज नाम हरि की, म्हारे हिवरे खटकी ॥**

**Guru Milya Raidas Ji Dini Gyan Ki Gutki.  
Chot Lagi Nij Nam Hari Ki Mharey Hivrey Khatki.**

Mirabai said, 'I found Saint Raidas as my Guru who gave me knowledge of spiritualism. By his words, I was engrossed in the worship of Lord which was liked by my heart.'

After Mirabai also became a disciple of Saint Raidas, both Queen Jhali and Mirabai organized a grand feast in his honor and invited all the respected persons of the State of Chittor, including all the Brahmins. But when the Brahmins of the State learned that both Queen Jhali and Mirabai had become disciples of Saint Raidas, a

person of a so-called lower caste, they refused to attend the feast. This created a very difficult situation for both Queen Jhali and Mirabai, and they approached Saint Raidas in distress.

Saint Raidas said humbly, “O sisters, why do you worry over such a small matter? I shall be perfectly happy to partake of your offering here in my own quarters with my family. Please tell the Brahmins and all the honored persons of your State, whoever has been invited, not to be anxious. Let them attend the feast wholeheartedly and bless both of you.”

The feast was arranged as planned. When the Brahmins sat down to take their meal, each one suddenly saw hundreds of forms of Saint Raidas seated among them, one between every two Brahmins. The Brahmins were struck with astonishment and at once realized that Saint Raidas was no ordinary man but a divine personality. Leaving their food untouched, they all went at once to Saint Raidas in the guest house, folded their hands, and begged forgiveness.

Saint Raidas, full of compassion, forgave them immediately. Thereafter, in front of all the Brahmins, he opened his chest and revealed the golden sacred thread (Yagyopavit) within. The Brahmins bowed to him with reverence and humbly requested him to join them in the meal.

This incident is described by Saint Raidas in his poetry as follows.

गई घर झाली पुनि बोलि के पठायो अहो,  
जैसे प्रतिपाली अब तैसे प्रतिपालिये ।  
आपहुं पधारें जस बहु धन पतवारिये,  
बिप्र सुनि पांव धरे, सीधो दे निवारिये ॥  
द्वे द्वे मढी एक यो रैदास को निहारिये ।  
देखि भई आंखें दीन समझ न कुछ आविये ।  
स्वर्ण को जनेऊ कधो, त्वचा कीनी नियारिये ॥

**Gai Ghar Jhali Puni Boli Ke Pathayo Aho,  
Jaise Pratipali Ab Taise Pratipaliye.  
Aaphun Padharen Jas Bahudhan Patwaariye,  
Bipra Suni Paanw Dhare, Seedho De Nivariye.  
Dwe Dw e Madhi Ek Yo Raidas Ko Nihariye.  
Dekhi Bhayee Aanken Deen Samajh Naa Kuch Aaviye.  
Swarn Ko Janaiu Kadho, Twacha Keeni Niyariye.**

Mirabai became a true and steadfast devotee of Saint Raidas. Her faith in her Guru was deep, unwavering, and absolute.

Saint Raidas remained in Chittor for about a month and then returned to his native village, Mandur, near Kashi. Unfortunately, soon after his departure, Queen Jhali passed away. With the death of her mother-in-law, Mirabai's troubles began to intensify.

King Vikramjit, the new ruler of Chittor and Mirabai's brother-in-law, once had her thrown into the Gambhiri River at midnight. In that desperate moment, she prayed to her Guru for protection. Amid the turmoil of the waves, she beheld the presence of her Guru, Saint Raidas. By his grace, the raging waters gently carried her back to the riverbank. This incident firmly established in Mirabai's heart the greatness and divine power of Saint Raidas.

On another occasion, while absorbed in an intuitive devotional state of meditation, Mirabai was speaking and laughing in the spiritual presence of Guru Saint Raidas within her chamber. King Vikramjit happened to overhear her voice and assumed that she was secretly conversing with some stranger inside her room. Enraged, he drew his sword and rushed to the door, ordering her to open it. When Mirabai opened the door, there was no one inside. The room was filled with dazzling divine light, and Mirabai stood absorbed in meditation. This sight deeply shocked the king. His conscience rebuked him, and he fell unconscious. After some time he regained consciousness and, feeling helpless and disturbed, quietly left the room.

Mirabai was then subjected to yet another severe trial. A bed was prepared for her with sharp nails fixed beneath its cushions. It was deceptively presented as a soft and comfortable resting place. Mirabai accepted it in obedience to the will of her Guru. By the protective grace of Guru Saint Raidas, the sharp nails turned into flowers for her. She slept peacefully upon that bed through the night.

Still haunted by his obsession with eliminating Mirabai, King Vikramjit devised yet another plan in consultation with his ministers. Poisoned milk was to be offered to her under the false pretense that it was nectar sent by Guru Saint Raidas. Udabai, the sister of King Vikramjit, secretly informed Mirabai that the milk prepared for her was poisoned and urged her not to drink it. But Mirabai replied that if it had indeed been said to come from Guru Saint Raidas, she would accept it as nectar.

As planned, the poisoned milk was presented to Mirabai through Pandit Daya Ram, who told her that it had been sent by Guru Saint Raidas and that she should drink it. In her inward meditation, Guru Saint Raidas instructed her that although the vessel contained poison, she should drink it fearlessly as nectar. Mirabai then lovingly chanted the holy name of Guru Saint Raidas and Lord Krishna, and, in deep devotion, danced while holding the vessel in her hands. By divine grace, the poison was transformed into nectar. She drank it and was filled with bliss. In ecstasy she sang:

**विष कौ प्याला राणा जी मोकू दियो, मै मृत्यु को पाऊँ ।  
कर चरणमित पी गयी रे, गुण गोबिंद का गाऊँ ॥**

**Vish Ko Pyala Rana Ji Mppku Diyo,  
Mein Mratyu Ko Paaon.  
Kar Charanamit Pee Gayee Re,  
Gun Gobind Kaa Gaaon.**

Rana Ji sent poisonous milk of pot for me to drink. I drank considering this as nectar by meditating on Govind.

King Vikramjit continued to devise one scheme after another to kill Mirabai. In another attempt, a poisonous snake was sent to her in a covered pot, falsely presented as a garland sent by Guru Saint Raidas. It was expected that when Mirabai opened the pot, the snake would bite her. But Mirabai meditated on Guru Saint Raidas and Lord Krishna. By the spiritual power of her Guru, the snake turned into a beautiful garland. When she lifted the lid of the pot, she found within it not a snake, but a lovely floral garland. She joyfully lifted it and placed it around her neck. Overwhelmed with gratitude, she sang spontaneously:

**सांप पिटारो राणा जी भेजो, सो मैं मरूं तत्काल ।  
हंस हंस मीरा कंठ लगायो, यह तो नौसर हार ॥**

**Saanp Pitaro Rana Ji Bhejyo,  
So Main Maroon Tatkaal.  
Hans Hans Meera Kanth Lagayo,  
Yeh To Nausar Haar.**

Rana Ji sent a pot with poisonous snake to kill her. She wore it happily as blessings of Guru, and it turned into necklace of flowers.

Mirabai again offered her heartfelt gratitude to Guru Saint Raidas. Time after time, she was saved by the grace of her Guru and Lord Krishna.

At last, King Vikramjit became helpless. He surrendered before Mirabai and begged forgiveness for all his previous attempts to kill her. Mirabai forgave him. From then onward, King Vikramjit and the members of his family developed deep reverence for Guru

Saint Raidas. Mirabai herself composed and sang many devotional poems in praise of Guru Raidas.

## Daily Satsang

After returning from Chittor to his native village of Mandur near Varanasi, Saint Raidas remained deeply absorbed in devotion to Lord Ram and began conducting regular discourses (Satsang) in an open field near his home. By this time, he had become a highly revered saint. His fame had spread throughout India, and thousands of people would gather daily to attend his Satsang.

It was his regular practice to distribute holy water from his Kathauti (platter) as Prasadam. Devotees would receive and drink this water with deep reverence. The holy water from his Kathauti was believed to possess miraculous power. It cured illnesses and other ailments, purified the hearts of those who drank it, awakened devotion to the Lord within them, and even showed them the way to overcome their worldly troubles.

Once, a wealthy businessman happened to be present at one of these Satsangs. After the gathering ended, Saint Raidas, as usual, distributed the holy water from his Kathauti to all present. The businessman too received some of this water. However, considering Saint Raidas to be of a lower caste and therefore “untouchable,” he did not drink it. Instead, he merely sprinkled the water upon his clothes. When he returned home, he discarded those clothes, feeling that they had been defiled by contact with water from an untouchable person. He then donated the clothes to one of his sweepers.

The sweeper, delighted to receive fine clothes from his employer, immediately put them on. The moment he wore them, his whole body became filled with a fragrance like that of heavenly flowers. At the same time, the businessman developed a disease in his fingers resembling leprosy. He at once realized that this was the result of insulting the holy water of the saint. Filled with remorse, he ran to the hut of Saint Raidas and fell at his feet. Saint Raidas, ever compassionate, forgave him and once again sprinkled him

with the holy water from his Kathauti. Immediately, the businessman was cured. Thereafter, he accepted Saint Raidas as his revered Guru.

Saint Raidas also had great love for animals. He would often go alone into the forest near Varanasi and meditate there in solitude upon the Lord. Many species of animals, especially deer, lived in that forest. Once, while Saint Raidas was sitting on a stone in deep meditation, he became aware through his divine vision that a hunter had set a net and captured a female deer. The hunter intended to kill her. Saint Raidas perceived that the deer had only come into the forest to gather food for her hungry young calves.

He approached the hunter and requested him to release the deer for a short time so that she might feed her starving calves. He assured the hunter that she would return afterward, and he could then kill her if he still wished. At first the hunter refused. However, he finally agreed to release the deer on one condition—that Saint Raidas stand as surety for her. If the deer failed to return, Saint Raidas would have to compensate him for the value the hunter had expected to gain from her.

Saint Raidas accepted this condition, and the hunter released the deer. The deer ran to her calves, fed them, and then told them how she had been captured and released only temporarily on the surety of a saint.

The calves replied, “O mother, we do not wish to live without you. We too shall accompany you and die with you if need be.”

So the deer, together with her calves, returned to the place where Saint Raidas and the hunter were waiting. The hunter was astonished by the truthfulness of the deer. At once he understood that Saint Raidas was no ordinary human being, but a great divine soul. He fell at the feet of the saint, repented for all the animals he had killed in the past, and vowed never again to take the life of any

creature. The deer and her calves were freed, and the hunter became a disciple of Saint Raidas.

Although Saint Raidas was exceedingly humble and widely respected by the masses, there still remained a few jealous Brahmins who continued to hate him and sought every opportunity to insult or even destroy him. They approached the Sultan of Jaunpur and lodged complaints against him. The Sultan was known for his cruelty toward the followers of Hindu Dharma, especially toward Hindu saints, religious leaders, traditions, and culture. He was forcibly converting large numbers of Hindus to Islam. Seeing in this a good opportunity to defame Hindu religion and its spiritual leaders, he eagerly entertained the complaints against Saint Raidas. He considered Saint Raidas not only a hypocrite in his own eyes, but one whom even certain Hindu Brahmins had denounced. The Sultan therefore ordered his soldiers to arrest Saint Raidas and throw him into prison.

By the Sultan's command, Saint Raidas was imprisoned. Upon entering the jail, Saint Raidas sat in meditation. Then a miracle took place: the locks of the prison broke open by themselves. The soldiers were astonished. After some time, they saw Saint Raidas walking freely outside the jail in the garden, despite being under strict guard. This astonishing घटना was immediately reported to the Sultan.

The Sultan then realized the greatness of Saint Raidas. He ordered that he be released and personally apologized to him.

That very night, while sleeping in his palace, the Sultan saw a strange dream. In it, he found himself surrounded by enemies who had imprisoned him and were about to kill him. At that critical moment, Saint Raidas appeared and rescued him. This dream deeply impressed the Sultan and convinced him of the spiritual greatness of Saint Raidas. From that time onward, he never again interfered in the affairs of Saint Raidas.

The devotion of Saint Raidas towards Lord Ram was increasing day by day.

दिन दिन हिरदय हरी विस्वासू ।  
दिन दिन बड़ो भयो रैदासु ॥

**Din Din Hirad Hari Viswasu.**  
**Din Din Bado Bhayo Raidasu.**

As Raidas was growing older, his devotion to God was increasing manyfold.

He prayed to Lord Ram day and night, beseeching Him to grant him Darshan—to behold the Lord in person with his own eyes. Saint Kabir has beautifully described the condition of Saint Raidas during this period. He lost all desire for sleep. He no longer had any interest in food. The pain of separation from Lord Ram became unbearable for him.

निंदिया ना आये, अन्न ना भावे । बार बार रैदास विरहा सताये ॥

**Nindiyaa Na Aaye, Anna Na Bhave.**  
**Baar Baar Raidas Viraha Sataaye.**

Raidas was not able to sleep. He lost all interest in food. He was burning in the fire of separation from the Lord.

Saint Raidas was now becoming completely detached from the world. His consciousness was turning wholly toward God. He would often say that he was not a learned man and possessed no spiritual wealth except the holy name of Lord Ram, which had been bestowed upon him by his Guru, Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji. He had unshakable faith in the words of his Guru that one day Lord Ram would embrace him and relieve him of the agony of this separation.

राम नाम सच्चा है, और सभी झूठा है ।  
हो बंजारों राम को, सहज करो व्यापार ॥  
राम नाम धन लागिया, तों विष लाग्यो संसार ॥

**Ram Nam Sachha Hai, Aur Sabhi Jhoonthaa Hai.  
Ho Banjaro Ram Ko, Sahaj Karo Vyaapaar,  
Ram Naam Dhan Laaghiyaa, Ton Vish Laagyo Sansaar.**

The name of Lord Ram alone is true; everything else is false. Let us become traders in the name of Lord Ram. If one acquires the wealth of the name of Ram, one can easily endure this world, which is filled with poison.

So deeply absorbed was he in Lord Ram that he had scarcely any time left to work for his livelihood. His financial condition continued to decline. Once, a wealthy merchant who was his disciple donated several gold coins to him. Yet Saint Raidas neither kept those coins for himself nor used them for his daily needs. Instead, he donated them for the construction of a temple of Lord Ram in the village.

As his devotion to the Lord deepened, Saint Raidas came closer and closer to the truth and to the true understanding of the teachings of his Guru, Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji. He spread the message of his Guru through social reform. He always remained in a state of inner joy and spoke nothing but the truth.

रैदास बामन मत पूजिये, जो होये गुणहीन ।  
पूजहि चरण चांडाल के, जो होये गुण प्रवीण ॥

**Raidas Baaman Mat Poojiye, Jo Hoye Gunheen.  
Poojahi Charan Chaandaal Ke, Jo Hoye Gun Parveen.**

Saint Raidas says: Do not worship a Brahmin if he is devoid of virtue. It is better to worship the feet of a person of lower caste if he is endowed with wisdom and noble qualities.

Following in the footsteps of his Guru Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji, Saint Raidas also rejected ritualism as a means to obtain the grace of God. He taught that chanting the name of Lord Ram alone was sufficient to receive divine grace. God dwells within oneself; there is no need to wander to pilgrimages, temples, or other sacred places in search of Him. If one calls upon Lord Ram with sincere love and devotion, He will surely appear.

**जा काज में डोरयो, फिरतो सो अब घाट में आय ।  
कहि रैदास देखो मन मांहि ॥**

**Jaa Kaaj Mein Dorayo, Phirato So Ab Ghat Mein Aay.  
Kahi Raidas Dekho Man Maanhi.**

Saint Raidas says that he searched for God everywhere, but ultimately found Him within his own heart.

Saint Raidas continued to swim in the river of nectar-like love for God. He was intoxicated with the wine of devotion to Lord Ram, and in that divine intoxication he was ready to offer even his own head to the Lord.

**देहु कलाली एक प्याला, ऐसा अवधु है मतवाला ।  
कहै कलाली प्याला देऊँ, पीवन हारे का सर लेऊँ ॥**

**Dehu Kalali Ek Pyala, Eisa Awadhu Hai Matwala.  
Kahai Kalali Pyala Deyun, Peewan Haare Kaa Sar Leyun.**

O Lord, give me one cup of the wine of love. I wish to be so immersed in Your love by drinking that divine wine that, in that intoxication, I may be ready to offer even my head to You.

Saint Raidas attained the highest state of bliss. In that exalted condition, he would remain unconscious for days together. Once, someone asked him to describe this state of bliss. Saint Raidas replied that just as a dumb person cannot describe the taste of jaggery, so too he could not adequately describe the joy of this blissful experience. One must realize it for oneself in order to know its sweetness.

**गूंगे का गुर कहा बखाने ।**

**Goonge Kaa Gur Kahaa Bakhane.**

Saint Raidas attained completeness. He had become one with God. Thereafter he began preaching the ideal of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**—that the whole universe is one family. All beings are part of the one Divine. We are all brothers and sisters and must live together in harmony.

**कृष्ण करीम, राम हरी राघव जब लग एक ना पेशा ।  
वेद कतेब कुरान पुरानन, सहज एक नहीं नवेशा ॥**

**Krishna Karim, Ram Hari Raghav Jab Lag Ek Na Peshha.  
Ved Kateb Quran Puraanan, Sahaj Ek Nahi Navेशha.**

If one does not understand Krishna, Karim, Ram, Hari, and Raghav to be one and the same, then it is not easy to understand the Vedas, the Puranas, the Quran, and other sacred scriptures.

## Meeting with Guru Nanak Dev

When Guru Nanak Dev came to Kashi on pilgrimage, he accepted the invitation of Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji to stay with him. Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji then introduced his disciples, Saint Kabir and Saint Raidas, to Guru Nanak Dev. In this way, Guru Nanak Dev met Saint Raidas in the late fourteenth century.

Guru Nanak Dev was deeply impressed by the teachings of Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji, Saint Kabir Ji, and Saint Raidas Ji.

Later, Guru Arjun Dev Ji collected forty-one sacred hymns (Bani) of Saint Raidas and incorporated them into the Shri Guru Granth Sahib.

Some of the hymns of Saint Raidas included in the Shri Guru Granth Sahib are given below.

**Ikoa'nkār satgur parsād.**

One universal creator God.

**Ēk anēk biāpak pūrak jaṭ dēkhau taṭ soī.**

In the one and in the many, He is pervading and permeating; wherever I look, there He is.

**Māiā chīṭar bachīṭar bimohiṭ birlā būjhai koī.**

The marvellous image of Maya is so fascinating; how few understand this.

**Sabh gobind hai sabh gobind hai gobind bin nahī koī.**

God is everything, God is everything. Without God, there is nothing at all.

**Sūṭ ēk maṇ saṭ saha'ns jaisē oṭ poṭ parabh̄ soī.**

As one thread holds hundreds and thousands of beads, He is woven into His creation.

**Jal ṭarang ar fēn buḍbuḍā jal ṭē bhinn na hoī.**

The waves of the water, the foam and bubbles, are not distinct from the water.

**Ih parpanch̄ pārbarahm kī līlā bichṛaṭ ān na hoī.**

This manifested world is the playful game of the Supreme Lord God; reflecting upon it, we find that it is not different from Him.

**Mithiā bharam ar supan manorath saṭ paḍārath jāniā.**

False doubts and dream objects - man believes them to be true.

**Sukariṭ mansā gur upḍēsī jāgaṭ hī man māniā.**

The Guru has instructed me to try to do good deeds, and my awakened mind has accepted this.

**Kahaṭ nāmḍēo har kī rachnā ḍēkhhu riḍai bichārī.**

Says Naam Dav, see the Creation of the Lord, and reflect upon it in your heart.

**Ghaṭ ghaṭ anṭar sarab niranṭar kéval ēk murārī.**

In each and every heart, and deep within the very nucleus of all, is the One Lord.

## **Mahasamadhi (Final Abode)**

Saint Raidas is believed to have lived a long life of 137 years, though some traditions say 120 or 126 years. It was during the mid-sixteenth century that he finally entered Mahasamadhi.

On one day in that period, Saint Raidas told his wife Lona early in the morning to prepare herself to go to Vaikuntha, the Divine Abode.

**अब में हरो रे हरी ।  
हलन चलन ते देह थकित, भई लोकन वेद बड़ाई ।  
थकित भयो नाचन और गावन ते, थकी पूजा सेवा ॥**

**Ab Mein Haro Re Hari.  
Halan Chalan Te Deh Thakit,  
Bhai Lokan Ved Badayee.  
Thakit Bhayo Nachan Aur Gavaan Te,  
Thaaki Pooja Sevaa.**

O Lord, I am now tired. I get easily tired by roaming around. I can no longer do your prayer, nor sing and dance in Your glory, O Lord.

He then became deeply absorbed in chanting the holy name of the Lord. News of his impending Mahasamadhi spread throughout Kashi, and people gathered in large numbers to offer their final salutations to their beloved Guru. It is said that a divine celestial vehicle descended from the heavens, and Lord Ram Himself appeared from within it. Saint Raidas and his wife Lona then entered that divine vehicle. Having lived an intensely spiritual life and having left behind a profound legacy of sacred hymns, Saint Raidas and his wife Lona are believed to have ascended to Heaven with their physical bodies.

All the devotees remained for three days on the banks of the holy Ganga, fasting, singing kirtans, and praying to Saint Raidas to grant them some token of his continued presence wherever he had gone. On the third day, it is said that Saint Raidas's paten descended from the sky, and the devotees, filled with joy, began singing the kirtans of Lord Ram with great fervor.

## Philosophy of Saint Raidas

According to the *Bhaktamal* text, Saint Raidas was pure in speech, capable of resolving the spiritual doubts of all who came to discuss matters of truth with him, and entirely unafraid to acknowledge his humble origins and actual caste. These qualities reveal a person who had attained the inward contentment and equanimity of the highest spiritual state.

The poetry of Saint Raidas is deeply imbued with themes of boundless love and devotion to God.

Saint Raidas is recognized as one of the foremost luminaries of the medieval North Indian Bhakti Movement. He was at once a cobbler, saint, poet, philosopher, and social reformer. Along with Namdev and Kabir, he is one of the few Bhakti saints whose influence crossed linguistic and regional boundaries and became significant in several parts of India. The extent of his popularity can be understood from the variety of names by which he came to be known among his followers in different regions and languages. He is remembered as Raidas, Rohidas, Ruidas, Ramadas, Raedas, Rohitas, Rahdes, Ravi Das, and Rabi Das.

His poetry possesses a universal appeal. It is rich with expressions of adoration for God and an intense longing for divine union. At the same time, it gives important space to the dream of a better world and to resistance against exploitation, oppression, and the misuse of religion by those in power. His poetry reflects his vision of the social and spiritual needs of human beings. He is regarded as a messiah of the downtrodden. His followers worship his image, recite his hymns morning and night, celebrate his birth anniversary as a sacred religious occasion, and place deep faith in his spiritual power.

The Bhakti-based method of protest adopted by Saint Raidas was both novel and courageous. It was novel because it rested upon compassion for all and complete faith in God. His principle of compassion reflected the deeply egalitarian features of his social philosophy and his struggle for justice. His concept of absolute faith in God revealed the indifference of the elite classes of his time toward the suffering of the oppressed, for whose upliftment he found no refuge except in the Divine.

His method was daring in another sense as well. In order to symbolize his spiritual revolt, he chose to adopt external markers traditionally reserved for Brahmins—an act considered not only objectionable but dangerous for an outcaste in his time. He openly challenged the tyranny of the Brahmins and defied their restrictions by wearing the **Dhoti**, the cloth wrapped around the waist, and the **Tilak**, the sacred mark upon the forehead, both of which were forbidden to untouchables.

The poetry of Saint Raidas is known for its humility and devotion. He advocated self-help as a means of overcoming suffering. His commitment to self-reliance is clearly reflected in the well-known legend of his refusal to use the *Paras*—the mythical philosopher’s stone that turns iron into gold—to make himself wealthy. He bestowed dignity and sanctity upon manual labor. The Bhakti path of Saint Raidas thus became a non-violent struggle for the emancipation and empowerment of those sections of society who had been socially excluded.

## SAINT SAMARTH GURU SWAMI RAMDAS



## Introduction

The great Hindi poet and devoted servant of the Lord, Shri Moropant Ji, once said:

**गांवीं संत चरित्रें हो, पावन परम पवित्रें हों।**

**Gaanween Sant Charitrein Ho,  
Paawan Param Pavitren Hon.**

Those who sing the glory of the Saints attain sacredness and supreme purity.

It is said that while the tongue relishes the deliciousness of food and thereby satisfies the physical body, the singing of the glories of saints nourishes the soul and fills it with eternal peace and happiness. Saint Kabir Ji also declared that even a few moments spent in the company of saints or in singing their glories are capable of erasing countless sins.

**एक घड़ी आधी घड़ी, आधी में पुनि आध ।  
कबीर संगत साध की, हरे कोटि अपराध ॥**

**Ek ghadi aadhee ghadee. Aadhee mein puni aadh.  
Kabir sanga saadh ki, hare koti apraadh.**

Even a moment, half a moment, or even half of that moment spent in the company of saints destroys millions of sins.

Goswami Tulsidas Ji has also beautifully expressed that if Lord Ram is like an infinite ocean, then saints are like the life-giving rain, for the ocean itself cannot remain full without the rains. If the Lord is like a sandalwood tree, then the saints are its sacred fragrance. The ultimate fruit of all spiritual disciplines such as worship, austerity, and yoga is liberation (Moksha). True devotion

to the Lord alone leads us to that final goal of life. Yet even devotion to the Lord cannot be attained without the blessings of saints.

राम सिंधु घन सज्जन धीरा । चंदन तरु हरि संत समीरा ॥  
सब कर फल हरि भगति सुहाई । सो बिनु संत न काहूँ पाई ॥

**Ram sindhu ghan sajjan dhira.  
Chandan taru hari sant samira.  
Sab kar phal hari bhagati suhaee,  
So binu sant n kahoon pae.**

Thus, the blessings of saints are essential for attaining true peace and happiness. One of the most effective ways to receive the grace of saints is by singing their glory and remembering their divine lives. With this humble intention, an attempt is made here to present a brief account of the life of the great saint Samarth Guru Swami Shri Ramdas Ji Maharaj, who played a crucial role in preserving Sanatan Dharma during the seventeenth century when it faced grave threats under the rule of the oppressive Mughal regime. Learning about the lives of such great personalities of Sanatan Dharma not only enriches our knowledge but also fills our hearts with peace through the remembrance of their divine deeds.

The great Marathi devotee of the Lord, Saint Shri Tukaram Ji Maharaj, once said:

ऋतेतुमारुताख्याश्च त्रेतायां पवनात्मजः ।  
द्वापरे भीष्म संगश्च रामदास कलौ युगे ॥

**Kratetumaarutaakhyaashch tretaayaam pavanaatmajah.  
Dwaapare Bheeshma sangashch Ramdas Kalau yuge.**

In every age there have been great devotees of the Lord. In Treta Yuga there was the supreme devotee of Lord Ram, Hanuman Ji.

In Dwapar Yuga there was the great Bhishma. In this present Kali Yuga, such a great devotee is Ramdas.

When the great king Chhatrapati Shivaji was able to protect and uplift the Hindu community by following the teachings of Samarth Guru Swami Ramdas Ji Maharaj, it is only natural that by remembering and singing the glory of this great saint we too may reform our lives and attain peace.

Samarth Guru Ramdas Ji Maharaj was a great Yogi, and many consider him to be the Lord Himself incarnated in human form for the protection of His devotees. Through the immense power of Yoga, he fulfilled his divine mission.

## **नास्ति योग समोबलाम ।**

### **Nasti Yog Samobalam.**

There is no power equal to Yoga.

Therefore, we should not be surprised that he was able to profoundly influence the great king Chhatrapati Shivaji and guide the Hindu community of his time. Instead, we should strive to learn from his teachings how to live meaningful lives in this material world, serving humanity and thereby pleasing the Lord so as to receive His blessings.

Samarth Swami Ji gave guidance for the followers of Sanatan Dharma belonging to all four varnas—Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra. It is our sacred duty to follow such teachings with sincerity. According to him, the duty of Brahmins is not merely to teach religious principles but also to awaken patriotism in society. Similarly, the duty of Kshatriyas is to protect the motherland. Once, when Chhatrapati Shivaji wished to renounce his kingdom and become a monk, Samarth Guru Ramdas advised

him that there was no need for him to abandon his duties to attain peace. If, as a Kshatriya, he fulfilled his responsibility of protecting the motherland—even if it meant attaining martyrdom—he would surely achieve peace and liberation.

O Lord, grant us the strength to follow the teachings of Samarth Swami Shri Ramdas Ji Maharaj so that we too may make our lives meaningful.

## Birth, Parents and Early Childhood

The day was **Chaitra Shukla Paksha Navami** of the year 1608— Ram Navami, the very day on which Lord Ram was born. The season of spring had just begun. The atmosphere was enchanting and delightful. It seemed as though every tree had adorned itself with new garments in the form of fresh green leaves. Flowers bloomed everywhere, spreading their sweet fragrance through the air. Birds sang and danced joyfully upon the branches of trees. The sky was clear, cloudless, and deep blue. Fields of mustard appeared like golden blankets spread across the earth. Beautiful butterflies fluttered gracefully in the air, captivating every eye. The melodious hum of bees, the sweet call of cuckoos, and the chirping of birds filled the surroundings with music. A sense of joy, happiness, and divine celebration seemed to pervade the hearts of everyone.

Goswami Tulsidas Ji has beautifully described the sacred beauty of such a day in the month of Chaitra when Lord Ram appeared on earth.

नौमी तिथि मधु मास पुनीता ।  
सुकल पच्छ अभिजित हरिप्रीता ॥  
मध्यदिवस अति सीत न घामा ।  
पावन काल लोक बिश्रामा ॥  
सीतल मंद सुरभि बह बाऊ ।  
हरषित सुर संतन मन चाऊ ॥  
बन कुसुमित गिरिगन मनिआरा ।  
स्रवहिं सकल सरिताऽमृतधारा ॥

Naumi tithi madhu māsa punitā,  
Sukala paccha abhijita haripitā.  
Madhya divasa ati seet na ghāmā,  
Pāvana kāla loka bishrāmā.

**Sitala mand Surabhi baha bāmu,  
Harashita sura santana mana cāmu.  
Bana kusumita girigana maniārā,  
Shravahin sakala saritāmrata dhārā.**

It was the ninth day of the bright half of the sacred month of Chaitra. The moon had entered the asterism named Abhijit, which is dear to the Lord. The sun stood at its meridian. The day was neither too cold nor too hot. It was a holy moment that seemed to bring rest and peace to the entire world. A gentle, cool, and fragrant breeze flowed through the air.

In the village of Jamb in the Beed district of Maharashtra, the household of Shri Surya Pant Ji was preparing to celebrate the festival of Shri Ram Navami with great devotion and enthusiasm. On that very auspicious day, Shrimati Ranubai, the wife of Shri Surya Pant Ji, began experiencing severe labour pains. Shri Surya Pant Ji immediately called for the village midwife. Hearing that Shri Surya Pant was about to become the father of another child, his friends and relatives gathered joyfully at his house.

It was exactly noon on the sacred day of Chaitra Shukla Paksha Navami when everyone witnessed a bright divine light descending from the sky and entering the room where Shrimati Ranubai was in labour. Soon afterward, the midwife emerged from the room and announced that a son had been born. Shri Surya Pant Ji was overwhelmed with joy and gratitude. In his happiness he gifted one of his precious gold ornaments to the midwife and celebrated the birth with great enthusiasm.

This was the second son born to Shrimati Ranubai. The elder son, who was about three years older than the newborn, was named Shri Gangadhar Pant. He later became renowned as Shri Rami Ji Maharaj. Shri Surya Pant Ji named the newborn child **Narayan**, because he had been born at the same auspicious moment when Lord Narayan had incarnated on earth as Lord Ram.

One day after Narayan's birth, Shri Surya Pant Ji was sitting in his prayer room and recalling an old memory. It had been his regular practice to visit the Ashram of the great saint of that time, Saint Shri Eknath Maharaj Ji, at least once every year to receive his blessings. A few years earlier, when he had visited the Ashram with his wife and bowed at the saint's feet, Maharaj Ji had looked at Ranubai and blessed her saying, "O Ranubai, prepare yourself to become the mother of Narayan Himself. He will soon bless you by incarnating as your son."

At that time Shri Surya Pant Ji could scarcely believe what he had heard. The thought that Lord Narayan Himself would be born as his son seemed far beyond anything he could imagine.

Now the words of the saint had come true. His son Narayan appeared to be none other than the incarnation of Lord Narayan Himself, for he had taken birth at the very moment that Lord Ram had appeared on earth. Shri Surya Pant Ji therefore decided that he must go again to the Ashram of Saint Shri Eknath Maharaj Ji to seek blessings not only for himself and his wife but also for both of their sons, Gangadhar and Narayan. He asked his wife Shrimati Ranubai to prepare for the journey.

Soon Shri Surya Pant Ji and Shrimati Ranubai arrived at the Ashram of Saint Shri Eknath Maharaj Ji along with their sons, Gangadhar and Narayan. Maharaj Ji blessed all four of them. Taking little Narayan into his lap, he said, "O Surya Pant and Ranubai, you are truly blessed to be the parents of this extraordinary child. In the near future a great king will be born in this land. That king will accept your son as his Guru, and under the guidance of your son he will liberate the motherland from the hands of oppressors."

Hearing this divine prophecy from the revered Saint Shri Eknath Maharaj Ji filled Shri Surya Pant Ji and Shrimati Ranubai with

immense joy and wonder. After staying in the Ashram for a few days, they returned to their village Jamb.

During his early childhood, the young Narayan was extremely mischievous and lively. He began speaking before the age of two. His intelligence was extraordinary. He could grasp the meanings of Vedic teachings almost instantly. Yet he was restless by nature and could hardly remain still even for a moment. When Shri Surya Pant Ji taught him Sanskrit shlokas, he would intentionally choose very difficult verses, hoping that they would take time for Narayan to memorize and thus keep him occupied with study instead of mischief. But Narayan would learn and understand those difficult shlokas within minutes and then run off to play with his friends.

He would climb tall and irregular trees with astonishing speed, just like a monkey. He would leap from one branch to another fearlessly. At times he would climb onto fragile branches that seemed unable to bear his weight, yet he somehow always remained safe. His friends would shout, “Padla, Padla!”—“You will fall!”—but Narayan showed no fear at all. Because of these remarkable qualities, the people of the village began to regard him as an incarnation of Lord Hanuman.

Once Narayan came to a barley field in his village. The farmer jokingly asked him, “Narayan, what do you want? Would you like some barley?”

Narayan replied cheerfully, “If you are willing to give me some barley, how can I refuse?”

The farmer laughed and said, “Very well. You may fill a sack with barley and take as much as you like.”

Narayan moved ahead and filled the sack with barley. The sack held more than twenty seers, nearly twenty kilograms of barley. Lifting the heavy sack upon his back, he ran swiftly toward his

home. The farmer stood astonished at what he had just witnessed and immediately followed Narayan to his house. Reaching there, he narrated the entire incident to Narayan's mother, Ranubai.

Mother Ranubai became very angry with Narayan, believing that he had stolen the farmer's barley. Narayan calmly explained that he had not stolen anything. The farmer himself had asked him to fill the sack with as much barley as he wished, and he had simply done as he was told.

Hearing this, the farmer was overwhelmed with reverence. He fell at the feet of Narayan and said, "O my Lord, I now recognize that you are an incarnation of Hanuman Ji endowed with divine power. I deeply regret that I made fun of you. Please forgive me."

Narayan forgave him and returned the barley.

Though he was mischievous in his childhood, Narayan possessed a compassionate and generous heart. Even at that young age, he performed numerous selfless acts for the welfare of the community and was always ready to help others.

According to the cherished tradition of Maharashtra, the village of Jamb celebrated the festival of Dussehra every year with great enthusiasm and grandeur. The village Ram Lila Mandali would perform the Ram Lila drama for nine consecutive days, and on the tenth day, when the episode of Ravana's defeat was enacted, an effigy of Ravana would be ceremoniously burned. Alongside this celebration, a large **Haat (bazaar)** would be organized with dozens of temporary shops selling sweets, food, clothes, and many other items. Nearly fifty thousand to one hundred thousand people from nearby villages would gather to witness the festivities.

For a few years, however, the rains had been insufficient. Water had become scarce, and the supply was extremely limited. Because

of this shortage, the villagers began to wonder whether the Haat and the celebrations could be held that year.

When Narayan learned about the problem, he quietly devised a plan. In the middle of the night, he gathered more than fifty of his childhood friends and asked them to bring pitchers, buckets, and other containers from their homes. Together, they traveled several kilometers to a canal outside the village. All through the night they filled their containers with water and carried it back, pouring it into the village pond again and again.

By early morning, before the sun had even risen, the pond was completely filled with water. There was now sufficient water for the Haat and the celebrations to proceed as usual. When the organizers learned that Narayan had inspired the children to perform this difficult task, they came to his home to express their gratitude. The festival and the Haat were then celebrated with the same pomp and joy as every year.

Another incident from the same period also deserves mention. In the village there lived a very miserly cowherd. He would sell all the milk and milk products produced by his cows and would not even give any to his own children. His children complained about this to Narayan. Determined to teach the man a lesson, Narayan devised a clever plan.

During the day, when the cowherd had gone to the fields to gather fodder for his cattle, Narayan gathered his friends. They collected bricks and arranged them to form a makeshift ladder reaching up to the roof of the cowherd's house. Then they drove the cows up the ladder onto the roof. Once all the cows had reached the rooftop, they removed the ladder.

When the cowherd returned from the fields in the evening, he was shocked to see all his cows standing on the roof of his house. He could hardly believe his eyes. Wondering how such a thing could

have happened, he soon learned from one of the villagers that Narayan and his friends were responsible.

The cowherd hurried to Narayan's house and pleaded with him to help bring the cows down. Narayan replied that he would do so only if the cowherd promised to share his milk and milk products with his children. The cowherd immediately agreed. Narayan then gathered his friends again, rebuilt the ladder with bricks, and safely brought all the cows down to the ground.

When Narayan was five years old, Shri Surya Pant Ji performed the **Yagyopaveet Sanskar** of both his sons, Gangadhar and Narayan.

Unfortunately, Shri Surya Pant Ji passed away when Narayan was only seven years old. The death of his father completely transformed the young boy's life. The lively and mischievous Narayan became quiet and withdrawn. He spoke very little and often sat silently in the corner of the room where his father used to work. From that day onward, no one ever saw him become irritated, angry, or demanding. He remained content and absorbed in his own thoughts. He walked slowly and seemed to be constantly immersed in deep reflection, almost like a person in meditation.

When Narayan reached the age of eight, he developed a strong desire to receive **Deeksha** from a Guru. Around that time a hermit, revered by everyone and considered a great yogi, arrived in the village. Narayan approached him and humbly requested that he grant him Deeksha and a sacred mantra. The hermit refused, saying that Narayan was still too young for initiation.

However, Narayan did not abandon his determination. He continued thinking about how he might obtain Deeksha. He even requested his elder brother Gangadhar to initiate him. Gangadhar replied that he himself was too young to accept a disciple.

Disappointed yet determined, Narayan one day quietly left his home and ran away.

## Deeksha and Marriage Proposal

Narayan ran toward the forest. There he came upon a temple of Lord Hanuman situated on the banks of the Godavari River. Exhausted and hungry, he sat down in the courtyard of the temple.

The priest of the temple noticed him and asked, “O young boy, who are you, and why have you come here?”

Narayan replied that he belonged to a Brahmin family and was searching for a Guru who could grant him Deeksha so that he might attain the Darshan of the Lord.

The priest was deeply impressed by the devotion and determination of this young boy. He offered him food and allowed him to stay in the temple. He advised Narayan to worship Hanuman Ji with the help of a Guru mantra. Narayan remembered a Guru mantra that his father had taught him.

**गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णु गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरा ।  
गुरुर्साक्षात् परब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः ॥**

**Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu,  
Gurur Devo Maheshwarah.  
Gurur Saakshaat Parbrahma,  
Tasmai Shri Guruve Namah.**

He began meditating while chanting this mantra, mentally accepting Lord Hanuman as his Guru. Days passed into weeks, and weeks into months. The temple priest kindly continued to provide him food and other necessities.

One day, while Narayan was deeply absorbed in meditation beneath a cluster of five trees in the temple courtyard, he had the divine **Darshan of Shri Hanuman Ji.**

Shri Hanuman Ji spoke to him as follows:

सर्व पृथ्वी मलेछमय झाली आहे ह्या करिताम आपण वैराग्यवृत्ति ने  
कृष्णातीरी राहून उपासना व ज्ञान यांची बृद्धि करुना जगद उद्धार  
करावा।

**Sarva prathvee malechmay jhaalee aahe hyaa karitaam  
aapan vairagya vrati ne Krishnaateeree raahun upaasanaa  
va gyaan yaanchee braddhi karanaa jagad uddhaar  
karaawaa.**

“O Child, the motherland has been occupied by the Yavans. Arise and live a life of renunciation. Reside on the banks of the Krishna River, increase devotion and wisdom, and work for the upliftment of the world.”

Narayan received this divine instruction from Lord Hanuman beneath the cluster of five trees. That place came to be known as **Panchvati**, meaning a cluster of five trees. It should not be confused with the Panchvati of Nasik district. This Panchvati, where Narayan received the Darshan of Lord Hanuman and heard this divine command, lies in the Beed district of Maharashtra.

While Narayan remained absorbed in austerity at the Hanuman temple, his family members were extremely worried about his disappearance. They searched everywhere for him. By coincidence, a cowherd from the village of Jamb passed by the temple and saw Narayan. Recognizing him immediately, he urged Narayan to return home, but Narayan refused.

When the cowherd returned to the village, he informed Gangadhar Ji about Narayan’s whereabouts. Gangadhar Ji and their mother Ranubai immediately set out for the Hanuman temple and found Narayan there.

Seeing Narayan alive and well filled them with immense joy. They embraced him lovingly and noticed a divine glow upon his face. It seemed as though he had received the blessings of the Lord. Ranubai pleaded with him with great affection and persuaded him to return home. Narayan agreed and returned with them.

Narayan regarded the divine instruction he had received from Lord Hanuman as his **Deeksha Mantra**. Obeying Hanuman Ji's command to dedicate his life to the service of Lord Ram and to protect Sanatan Dharma from the oppression of the Yavans, he began contemplating his future path.

He remained deeply absorbed in thought and gradually became more and more withdrawn from worldly interactions. He seldom mingled with others.

Mother Ranubai, unable to understand the profound spiritual transformation taking place within her son, believed that he had become depressed and lonely. Thinking that marriage might restore his happiness, she decided to arrange his marriage. She gently approached Narayan and requested him to agree.

The moment Narayan heard the word **marriage**, the calm and quiet boy suddenly became agitated. He firmly told his mother that he had not been born to marry and live the life of a householder. Instead, he had come into this world to carry out the work of the Lord by embracing the path of **Sanyas**.

Mother Ranubai, however, did not give up easily. She continued requesting him again and again to accept marriage. One day, when both she and Gangadhar insisted strongly, Narayan became so distressed that he climbed up a tree in the veranda of the house. Hours passed, yet he refused to come down.

Seeing this, Mother Ranubai burst into tears. When Narayan saw the tears in his mother's eyes, his heart melted. Overcome with emotion, he finally descended from the tree.

Mother Renubai then requested Purohit Ji, who had been a great friend of Shri Surya Pant Ji, the father of Narayan, to persuade Narayan to agree to marriage. Purohit Ji tried his best to convince him, but all his efforts proved futile. Narayan had by then become weary of the constant attempts made by family members as well as respected persons of society to force him into marriage. Deeply disturbed and annoyed by these repeated persuasions, he one day jumped into the waters of the Godavari River. Unfortunately, as he fell, his head struck against a stone in the river, and blood began to flow profusely from the wound. His elder brother Gangadhar and others immediately leapt into the river and rescued him. A physician was called to treat him. Although the injury eventually healed, it took a long time, and the scar of that wound remained with him throughout his life.

One day, while Narayan was still recovering from the wound, his mother came and sat beside his bed. Gently patting his back with deep affection, she spoke to him in a soft and loving voice:

**नारायण, माझे वचन तुला मान्य आहे की नाही?**

**Narayan, maanjhe vachan tulaa maanya aahe ki naanhee?**

O Narayan, will you please honour my words?

Narayan was deeply moved by his mother's emotion. Falling at her feet, he replied:

**माताश्री, हे ग्राम विचारता। आपले वचन मान्य करावयाचें नाही तर मग कोणाचे करावयाचे – न मातुः परः दैवतं – असे शास्त्र वचनच आहे।**

**Maataashree, he gram vichaarataa. Aaple vachan maanya karaavyaachen naahee tar mag konaachen karaavyaachen – Na Matuh Parah Daivatam – ase shashtra vachanach aahe.**

O Mother, what are you saying? If I do not honour your words, then whose words shall I honour? The scripture itself says: *Na Matuh Parah Daivatam*—there is no deity higher than the mother.

Mother Renubai was overjoyed to hear these words from Narayan and said, “Narayan, if that is so, why do you not agree to marry? Swear from your inner conscience that you will not refuse now.”

Narayan reflected for a moment upon his mother’s humble request and then replied:

**मी अंतरपाट धरेपर्यंत नाही ह्मणणर नाहीं।**

**Mee antarpaat dhaareparyant nahee hmnaar naahee.**

Sure, Mother, until my inner conscience says otherwise, I shall not refuse to marry.

The simple-hearted mother could not grasp the mystical meaning hidden in the words of her son and assumed that Narayan had finally consented to marriage.

Accordingly, she arranged his marriage with a beautiful girl named Sushila, the daughter of her brother Shri Bhanji Goswami, a resident of the nearby village of Asan.

On the date fixed for the marriage, the marriage party arrived at the house of Shri Bhanji Goswami in the village of Asan. Narayan was seated in the **Vivah Mandap**, and at that very moment he heard a voice from within his own conscience: “O Narayan, be mindful of this marriage.”

He immediately felt that this inner voice was warning him and advising him not to enter into marriage. At once he remembered the words he had spoken to his mother:

“Sure, Mother, until my inner conscience says otherwise, I shall not refuse to marry.”

Now his inner conscience was clearly directing him not to marry. He swiftly concluded in his mind that if he now refused marriage, he would not in truth be disobeying his mother’s command. The next moment, he rose from the marriage pavilion and began to run away. Those present tried to stop him, but who could restrain Narayan, who possessed the energy and vigor of Lord Hanuman?

The members of both the bridegroom’s and the bride’s families were thrown into great distress, especially Mother Renubai. The situation seemed to bring humiliation upon both households. Yet, as it was perhaps the will of God, one of the men in the marriage party offered his own son as a bridegroom so that the procession would not return without a bride. All agreed, and Sushila was married to that young man.

Meanwhile, Narayan continued running until he finally reached **Panchvati** in Nasik.

## Penance in Dakli and Tour of Bharatvarsh

It took Narayan four days to travel from the village of Asan to Panchvati in Nasik. He stayed in a temple of Lord Ram there for a few days and then moved onward to **Dakli**, where he began residing in a cave. There he immersed himself deeply in austerity and penance.

At that time, Narayan was only ten years old. Every day, during **Brahma Muhurta**, he would rise early, bathe in the waters of the Ganga, and remain standing in the river in meditation until noon. In the afternoon he would go on a **Bhiksha** round to a nearby village and live only on whatever alms he received.

In this way, many years passed. His body below the navel had become pale and white because of standing so long in the water of the Ganga. At last, pleased with his intense devotion and austerity, Lord Hanuman once again appeared before him and granted him Darshan. This time Lord Hanuman formally gave him Deeksha and bestowed upon him the new name **Swami Ramdas**.

One afternoon, as Swami Ramdas Ji was going on his usual Bhiksha round, he saw a young married woman coming toward him in tears. She folded her hands and fell at his feet. Seeing her, Swami Ji blessed her spontaneously, saying, “Be happy. May you become the mother of eight children (*Ashta Putra*) and may you enjoy long life with your husband (*Saubhagyavati Bhav*).”

On hearing this blessing, the woman began to cry even more bitterly. Swami Ji then asked her what troubled her so deeply. She replied that his blessing was of no use to her, because her husband had just died and she had no children.

Swami Ji at once said, “No, that cannot be. The words that have come from my mouth are the words of Lord Hanuman Himself.

They cannot prove false. Take me immediately to the body of your husband.”

The woman’s husband, Shri Atri Patwari of the nearby village of Dashak Panchak, had been suffering for some time from tuberculosis. On that day, the physician had declared him dead, and his relatives were already carrying his body to the cremation ground. His wife had wished to immolate herself with the body of her husband and become a **Sati**, but his relatives had prevented her from doing so. In truth, she had approached Swami Ji only to request him to persuade the relatives to allow her to become Sati, for she believed that Swami Ji, being a protector of Sanatan Dharma, would approve of such an act. She had never expected that he would bless her instead with the boon of eight sons and continued married fortune.

She led Swami Ji to the cremation ground, where the body of her husband was about to be consigned to the funeral pyre. Swami Ji went straight to the dead body and cried aloud, “O Atri Patwari, Lord Ram needs your services. Arise!”

At those words, Shri Atri Patwari sat up. Everyone present was stunned by the miracle. They fell at the feet of Swami Ji and began to praise him as if he were God Himself. But Swami Ji spoke humbly:

**स्तुतीचे काही कारण नाही, मी केवळ देव ब्राह्मणाचा दास आहे।**

**Stuteechen Kaahee Kaaran Naahe, Mee Kewal Dev  
Braahmnaachaa Das Ahe’.**

There is no need to praise me. I am merely a servant of the Lord.

Remarkably, Shri Atri Patwari was not only restored to life, but his tuberculosis too was cured.

From that day onward, Swami Ramdas Ji became for this couple like God Himself. When their first son was born, they took the child to Swami Ji and requested that, when the boy came of age, he might be accepted into his service. Swami Ji reluctantly consented and instructed them to bring the boy back after his **Yagyopaveet Sanskar**. In time, just as he had blessed them, more children were born to the couple.

When the first-born son of Shri Atri Patwari was five years old, his Yagyopaveet Sanskar was performed, and he was brought to Swami Ji. Swami Ji blessed him, accepted him as his disciple, and named him **Uddhav**.

Time passed on, and it had now been twelve years since Swami Ji had begun his penance in Dakli. At this point he decided to undertake a journey across Bharatvarsha in order to see for himself the political and economic condition of the country.

He first went to **Kashi**. Upon arriving there, he proceeded to have Darshan of Lord Shiva in the temple of Kashi Vishwanath. At the time of his arrival, the priests were engaged in performing **Rudrabhishek** to Lord Shiva. As this ritual was considered the exclusive right of Brahmins, the priests, mistaking Swami Ji for a non-Brahmin, did not permit him to approach near the Lingam. Swami Ji raised no objection and simply offered his prayers from the veranda of the temple. After completing his worship, he quietly returned to the Ganga Ghat where he was staying.

Lord Shiva, however, did not accept the Rudrabhishek offered by the priests. Then the priests began to realize that this might have happened because of the saintly Sanyasi whom they had not permitted to approach the sacred Lingam. They sent men in search of Swami Ji and finally found him at the Ghat of Mother Ganga. Falling at his feet, they begged forgiveness. Swami Ji graciously forgave them and returned with them to the temple. Only then was

the Rudrabhishek performed once more, and this time it was accepted by Lord Shiva.

Swami Ji stayed in Kashi for several weeks, and many devotees there became his disciples. He established a **Math** in the city and, appointing one of his disciples in charge of it, left for **Ayodhya**.

In Ayodhya he had Darshan of Lord Hanuman and Lord Ram Lalla. After staying there for some weeks, he proceeded to **Vrindavan**. After residing there for a few more weeks, he continued his journey to many other sacred places of pilgrimage and eventually reached **Dwarka**. Everywhere he traveled, numerous devotees became his disciples. At each important place he established a Math and entrusted it to one of his followers before moving onward.

This extensive tour of Bharatvarsha gave Swami Ramdas Ji a profound opportunity to understand the religious, political, and economic condition of the country. He saw with his own eyes that in the North, the cruel Mughal rulers, and in the South, Muslim rulers such as Adilshah, Nizamshah, and Kutubshah, were oppressing and persecuting the followers of Sanatan Dharma. Hindus were branded as *Kafir* by these rulers and treated as unworthy people. Every religion other than Islam was condemned, and systematic efforts were being made to destroy non-Islamic faiths, their religious leaders, and their places of worship. A notion was being aggressively spread that Prophet Muhammad was the only Prophet and the Quran the only scripture worthy of study and obedience. Hindus were compelled by force to abandon their ancestral faith and convert to Islam. Those who refused were often put to death, and such acts of killing were falsely glorified by these so-called religious zealots as holy deeds. Among them there prevailed a belief that Allah had granted them the right to kill followers of other religions who would not embrace Islam, and that by doing so they were pleasing their God.

As Swami Ramdas Ji moved from place to place, Hindus would approach him and narrate the heartbreaking stories of the suffering and humiliations they endured at the hands of these tyrannical rulers. Listening to these tales, Swami Ji's heart was filled with immense sorrow. He reflected deeply that Bharatvarsha had once been a divine land—*Dev Bhumi*. The people of this sacred land had once been masters of their own soil and had worshipped the Lord according to their own spiritual traditions. By what right had these foreign invaders come to oppress the people and insult them at every turn? Once, this land had been known throughout the world as the *Sone Ki Chidiya*—the Golden Bird—so rich and prosperous was it. But now poverty had reached its peak. Most people could not even obtain a full meal once in a day. For centuries, the people of this land had been peaceful and noble. Why then were they passively enduring the cruelties of these tyrants? Though they far outnumbered these uncivilized invaders who had entered and established their rule, why had they not risen up to reclaim their freedom and sovereignty? In a land where great spiritual heroes like Markandeya and Nachiketa had conquered even death, and where Lord Krishna had taught that the soul never perishes, how had the people become so fearful of death that they accepted slavery?

**नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।  
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥**

**Nainam chhindanti śhastrāṇi nainam dahati pāvakaḥ.  
Na chainam kledayantyaṅpo na śhoṣhayati mārutaḥ.**

Consciousness, which is the symptom of the soul, can be perceived by material instruments, but the soul itself cannot be contacted by any material object. This is so only because the soul is divine, and hence beyond the interactions of material objects. Shri Krishna expresses this vividly by saying that wind cannot wither the soul, nor can water moisten it or fire burn it.

Swami Ji saw that the Hindus were being plundered mercilessly by these demonic oppressors. Their noble women, pure like Mother Sita, were losing their honor in the hands of these uncivilized tyrants. Yet, merely to somehow sustain themselves and fill their stomachs, people continued to endure these injustices in silence. How had they forgotten that they were descendants of Lord Ram? Did they not remember that Lord Ram had liberated the world from evil by destroying wicked beings such as Khar, Dooshan, and Ravan? If only they were to call out to Lord Ram from the depths of their pure hearts, He would surely incarnate again—or send a chosen instrument—to rescue them. Lord Ram had delivered Ahalya and Shabari; He was *Patit Pawan*, the purifier of the fallen. He was the destroyer of sin and sinners, omnipresent and ever the protector of the righteous. It appeared to Swami Ji that the people had forgotten this eternal truth. He concluded that they must be organized, awakened, and inspired with such awareness. A sacred atmosphere had to be created in society. Every individual must awaken to the hidden presence of Lord Ram within his or her own heart.

## Union with Mother Renubai

Swami Ji now began preaching the principles of Sanatan Dharma and patriotism with renewed intensity, going from one village to another and awakening the inner consciousness of the people so that they might rise against the tyranny and injustice of the Islamic rulers. Twenty-four years had passed since he had left his home. Once, while he was delivering a sermon in a village in Gujarat, a resident of his native village Jamb happened to be present in the gathering. He recognized Swami Ji as Narayan of Jamb village. After the discourse concluded, the villager approached Swami Ji with humility, bowed at his feet, and introduced himself. He then told Swami Ji that ever since he had left home twenty-four years earlier, his mother Renubai had continued to wait for his return. She had lost her eyesight. Every day, from dawn until dusk, she sat in the veranda of her house, murmuring his name and praying to the Lord to send Narayan back to her. Now old and frail, she might leave this world at any moment. He implored Swami Ji to go at least once to the village and see her, so that she might die in peace.

At that time, Swami Ji had been planning to travel toward the Himalayas in the North. He therefore decided that before proceeding further, he would pass through Jamb and meet his mother. On his way, one day he arrived at the threshold of his old home in Jamb village and asked for Bhiksha.

Mother Renubai heard the voice of a wandering ascetic and instructed her daughter-in-law, the wife of Shri Gangadhar Ji, to give some Bhiksha to the Sanyasi.

Then Swami Ji spoke softly and humbly, “O mother, this Sanyasi will not return merely by taking Bhiksha.”

At once, Mother Renubai recognized the voice of her son.

She said, “Is it you, Narayan?”

“Yes, Mother, it is I,” replied Swami Ji, and at once fell at her feet.

Mother Renubai embraced her son and, kissing his forehead, said, “O Narayan, you have grown so much and become very tall. Alas, if only I were able to see you!”

As she spoke these words, tears flowed from her eyes.

Swami Ji was deeply pained by the condition of his mother. Looking upon her with compassion, he inwardly began praying to Lord Hanuman Ji and Lord Ram.

“O my Lord Ram, O my Guru Hanuman, my mother has always been humble and kind-hearted. To the best of my knowledge, she has committed no sin to deserve such suffering. If I have done any virtuous act in my life, then please grant its fruit to my mother. O Lord, restore her eyesight,” Swami Ji prayed silently from the depths of his heart, with tears in his own eyes.

The Lord heard his compassionate prayer. When Swami Ji touched the eyes of his mother, she was instantly cured and her sight was restored.

Seeing her son Narayan clearly before her, she embraced him once more and said jokingly, “O Narayan, now I can see you. I see that you are dressed like a Sanyasi. Have you accepted Sanyas? It even seems as if you have learned some black magic.”

Swami Ji replied humbly, “O Mother, yes, I have taken Deeksha from Lord Hanuman Ji and I am now a Sanyasi. Lord Hanuman has given me the name Ramdas. I have not learned nor do I practice any black magic. It is solely by the grace of Lord Ram and my Guru Lord Hanuman that your eyesight has been restored.”

**भूतांचे हृदय सर्व, नाम त्याचे राम राय ।  
रामदास नित्य गाय, तेचि भूत गे माय ॥**

**Sarva bhutaanche hraday. Naam tyaache Ram Raay.  
Ramdas nitya gaay, Techhi bhut ge maay.**

The Lord who lives in the hearts of all is called Lord Ram. O Mother, I am His devotee and sing His glory.

Mother Renubai was overjoyed to hear such beautiful words from the lips of her son.

She said, “O Narayan, you have redeemed our entire family.”

**नारायण, तू कुळाचा उद्धार केलास ।**

**Narayan, too kulaachaa uddhaar kelaas.**

After spending a few days with the family and receiving permission from his mother, Swami Ji decided to proceed toward the Godavari River in order to perform circumambulation at the place where the river meets the ocean. Before his departure, Mother Renubai made him promise that he would return at the time of her funeral. Swami Ji gave her that promise and then resumed his journey.

He reached the sacred spot where the Godavari divides into seven streams before entering the ocean. There Swami Ji performed seven circumambulations of each of the seven streams of Mother Godavari.

After completing the circumambulations, Swami Ji returned once again to Takli and resumed preaching Sanatan Dharma and patriotism. The suffering condition of the Hindu community, which he had witnessed during his travels across Bharatvarsha,

remained ever present in his mind, and he continued to seek divine guidance on how to accomplish the mission that had been entrusted to him.

One day, Lord Hanuman, his revered Guru, appeared before him and said, “O Ramdas, the time has now come for you to re-establish Sanatan Dharma. Act without delay. In the Sisodia lineage, a king named Shiva has been born. With his help, uplift and redeem the followers of Sanatan Dharma.”

Hearing these divine words from his Guru Hanuman Ji, Swami Ji resolved to proceed toward the South of the country. With this sacred purpose in his heart, he departed from Tikri.

## Apostle of Sanatan Dharma

After departing from Tikari, Swami Ji arrived at Mahabaleshwar, where he stayed for four months. During this period he established a Math there. Two renowned scholars of that time, Shri Anant Bhatt and Shri Diwakar Bhatt, became his disciples at this place. The number of his followers continued to grow steadily with each passing day. After instructing Shri Anant Bhatt Ji to oversee the Math, Swami Ji proceeded to Sitara on the banks of the Krishna River. He stayed there for several months and established another Math.

From Sitara he moved onward to Mahuli in the Thane district. While residing in Mahuli, many saints came to meet him. Among them was the great saint Shri Tukaram Ji Maharaj. Upon hearing that the revered Saint Tukaram Ji Maharaj had arrived to meet him, Swami Ramdas Ji immediately ran barefoot to welcome him. Saint Tukaram Ji warmly embraced him and accepted the hospitality of Swami Ramdas Ji for several days.

Saint Tukaram Ji Maharaj was deeply impressed by the personality and spiritual greatness of Swami Ramdas Ji. As a mark of honor and recognition, he bestowed upon him the title “**Samarth.**” From that time onward, Swami Ramdas Ji became widely known as **Samarth Swami Shri Ramdas Ji.**

Saint Tukaram Ji Maharaj said to him, “O Samarth, a few months ago King Shiva of the Sisodia clan visited me. He was so deeply absorbed in devotion to the Lord that he wished to renounce his kingdom and accept the life of an ascetic. I advised him that he was not destined to abandon his responsibilities, but rather to redeem Sanatan Dharma with the guidance of his Guru, Samarth Swami Ramdas. I blessed him that he would soon meet his Guru, who would guide him in fulfilling the true purpose of his life. He is searching for you. When he approaches you, please accept him as your disciple and work for the upliftment of Sanatan Dharma.”

Samarth Swami Ramdas Ji accepted the request of the great saint Shri Tukaram Ji Maharaj and promised that he would accept King Shiva as his disciple.

From there, Samarth Swami Ji proceeded to Paithan in the Aurangabad district. When he arrived in Paithan, he saw a group of children playing with a catapult (Gulel), trying to aim stones at birds flying in the sky. Their aim was poor, and none of the stones reached their targets. Samarth took the catapult from one of the boys and carefully aimed at a bird. When he released the stone, the bird fell from the sky, apparently dead. Samarth smiled gently at the children and then demonstrated to them the proper way to aim the catapult accurately.

Soon the news spread throughout the town like wildfire: “A Sanyasi has killed a bird.” The learned Pundits of the town gathered together and demanded that the Sanyasi perform an atonement ceremony; otherwise, they warned, he would be declared an outcast and condemned to suffer in hell after death.

Samarth Swami Ji calmly agreed to their demand. The Pundits performed a purification ritual with a sacred Havan, chanting holy mantras. After completing the ceremony, they declared the Sanyasi purified and began to leave the place.

At that moment Samarth Swami Ji requested them to wait and addressed them respectfully: “O revered Pundits, you have conducted a great purification ceremony and purified me. I am indeed grateful to you. But what about the bird?”

“What about the bird? It is dead,” the Pundits replied.

“If the bird remains dead even after such a lengthy purification ceremony performed by you, then this ritual is of no use. I cannot truly be purified unless this bird can fly again,” said Samarth.

“That is impossible,” replied the Pundits. “Once a creature dies, it cannot be revived.”

Samarth Swami Ji then approached the lifeless bird and sprinkled a few drops of water from his Kamandal upon it. Immediately the bird regained life and flew into the sky. Everyone present was astonished by this miracle. They fell at his feet, realizing the deeper meaning of his words.

Samarth then gently explained to them, “Remember, it is not Tantra, Mantra, or blind rituals that bring true atonement. Only righteous actions and virtuous deeds lead to purification.”

After staying in Paithan for a few days, Swami Ji proceeded to Kalhad. There too he established a Math and appointed one of his disciples, Shri Bajirao, as the **Mathadheesh** (head) of that Math.

Continuing his journey across Bharatvarsha, Samarth left Kalhad and reached Chafal. Shri Narsomalnath, a minister of King Shiva and the governor of Chafal, became his disciple and offered assistance in establishing a Math there. Samarth founded a Math in Chafal and appointed Shri Bhanji Joshi as its Mathadheesh.

From Chafal Samarth moved to Karveer, where he met Shri Varvaji Pant, the governor of the Karveer region appointed by King Shiva. Shri Varvaji Pant Ji also became his disciple and established a Math for him there.

While in Karveer, Swami Ji noticed a young boy named Amba who possessed remarkable intelligence, wisdom, and writing ability. Impressed by the boy’s talent, Samarth requested Shri Varvaji Pant to take him to meet Amba’s mother. Amba’s mother, Shrimati Rakhmabai, was the sister of Shri Varvaji Pant and a widow. She had two sons—Amba, the elder, and Dattoba, the younger.

Samarth blessed her and humbly requested if she would allow her son Amba to accompany him, as he needed a capable young disciple who could record his teachings in writing.

Shrimati Rakhamabai folded her hands and requested Samarth to grant Deeksha to her and both her sons and accept them as his disciples. Samarth graciously granted them Deeksha and accepted all three as his disciples. She then requested Samarth Swami Ji to take them with him wherever he went so that they might serve him. Samarth agreed.

After spending several weeks in Karveer, he proceeded toward Mysore, accompanied by Shrimati Rakhamabai and her two sons Amba and Dattoba.

Shri Varvaji Pant sent a message to the Patwari (revenue officer) of Mysore instructing him to make suitable arrangements for the stay of Samarth Swami Ji and his companions. The Patwari arranged accommodations for them in a temple.

One day, while Samarth was conducting a religious ceremony at the Patwari's house, dark clouds suddenly gathered in the sky. The surroundings became so dark that people could barely see even their own hands. Amba Ji stepped outside to see what had happened. In the darkness he failed to notice a well in front of the house and accidentally fell into it.

Hearing the sound of the fall, Samarth Swami Ji rushed outside and rescued Amba Ji. The boy was severely injured. Samarth touched his body with his divine hands, and instantly all the wounds disappeared.

He asked gently, "How are you feeling, my son?"

"In supreme bliss, my Lord," replied Amba Ji.

Samarth embraced him and gave him a new name—**Kalyan**, meaning *bliss*. Kalyan later became one of the greatest disciples of Samarth and recorded many of his teachings in written form.

After establishing a Math in Mysore as well, Samarth Swami Ji returned to Chafal. For the next several years he continued to deliver sermons on Sanatan Dharma and patriotism. He awakened the Hindu community to protect their faith by reminding them of the eternal principle:

**धर्मो रक्षति रक्षतः ।**

**“Dharmo Rakshati Rakshatah”**

If you protect Dharma, Dharma will protect you.

King Shivaji Maharaj, having heard from Saint Tukaram Ji Maharaj that a saint named Swami Ramdas Ji would become his Guru and guide him toward righteousness, was eagerly searching for an opportunity to meet him and request initiation. Shivaji Maharaj traveled to Chafal to obtain his Darshan, but unfortunately Samarth Swami Ji had already left on another journey to deliver his sermons. Unable to meet him, the king felt deeply disappointed. Before leaving, he left a message requesting Swami Ji to kindly inform him when and where he might obtain his Darshan.

## Chatrapati Shiva Ji and Samarth Swami Ramdas

Samarth Swami Ji was residing in Kondvad Fort when he received the message from King Shiva Ji Maharaj expressing his deep desire to meet him and receive Deeksha. In response, Samarth Swami Ji wrote a letter to him.

निश्चयाचा महामेरू, बहुत जनांसी आधारू ।  
अखंड स्थितीचा निर्धारू, श्रीमंत योगी ॥  
परोपकाराचिया राशी, उदंड घडती जयासी ।  
तयाचे गुण महत्वासी, तुलना कैसी ॥  
नरपति हयपति गजपति, गडपति भूपति जलपति ।  
पुरंदर आणि छत्रपति, शक्ति पृष्ठ भार्गी ॥  
यशवंत कीर्तिवंत, सामर्थ्यवंत वरदवंत ।  
पुण्यवंत नीतीवन्त, जाणता राजा ॥  
आचारशील विचारशील, दानशील धर्मशील ।  
सर्वज्ञानी सुशील, सकलाम ठायीं ॥  
धीर उदार गंभीर, शूर क्रियेसि तत्पर ।  
सावधपडें नृपवर, तुच्छ केले ॥  
तीर्थ क्षेत्र मोडली, ब्राह्मण स्थाने भ्रष्ट केली ।  
सकल पृथ्वी आंदोलली, धर्म गेला ॥  
देव धर्म गौ ब्राह्मण, करावया सरंक्षण ।  
हृदयस्थ जाहला नारायण, प्रेरणा केली ॥  
उदंड पंडित पुराणिक, कवीश्वर याज्ञिक वैदिक ।  
धूर्त तार्किक सभा नायक, तुमचा ठायीं ॥  
या भूमंडळाच्या ठाय, धर्म रक्षा ऐसा नाही ।  
महाराष्ट्र धर्म राहिला काही, तुम्हा करितों ॥  
आणखी ही धर्म कृत्ये चालती, आश्रित होऊनी कित्येकराहती ।  
धन्य धन्य तुमची कीर्ति, विश्वीं विस्तारली ॥

कित्येक दुष्ट संहारिले, कित्येकांस धाके सुटले ।  
कित्येकांस आश्रय काले, शिव कल्याण राजा ॥  
तुमचे देशी वास्तव्य केले, परंतु वर्तमान नाही खेतलें ।  
ऋणानुबंधे विस्मरण कालें, काय निरंगू ॥  
सर्वज्ञ मांडली धर्म मूर्ती, सांगणे काय तुम्हां प्रति ।  
धर्म स्थापनेची कीर्ति, सांभाळलीही पाहिजे ॥  
उद्दंडराज कारण तत्वे, तेने चित विभागले ।  
प्रसंग नसता लिहिलें, क्षमा केली पाहिजे ॥

Nischayaachaa mahameroo, bahut janaansi aadhaaru.  
Akhand sthiteechaa nirdhaaru, shreemant yogi.  
Paropkaaraachiyaa raashee, udand ghadatee jayaase.  
Tayache gun mahatwaasee, tulanaa kaisee.  
Narpati haypati gajpati, gadpati bhupati jalpati.  
Puranda r aani chatrpati, shakti prashth bhaagee.  
Yashwant keertivant, saamarthyvant varadvant.  
Punyavant neetivant, jaantaa raajaa.  
Aacharsheel vichaarsheel, daansheel dharmsheel.  
Sarvagyanee susheel, saklaam thaayeen.  
Dheer udaar gambheer, shoor kriyesi tatpar.  
Savadhpaden nrapvar, tuchh kele.  
Teerth kshetre modali, brahman sthaane bhrasht kailee.  
Sakal prathvee aandolalee, dharm gela.  
Dev dharm gau braahman, karavayaa sarankshan.  
Hradyasth jaahalaa naaraayan, prerna kelee.  
Udand pundit puraanic, kaveeshwar yagyik vedic.  
Dhoort taarik sabhaa naayak, tumacha thaayeen.  
Yaa bhoomandlaachyaa thaayee, dharm rakshaa  
eisaa naaheen.  
Maharashtra dharm raahilaa kaahee , tumhaa kariton.  
Aanakhi hee harm kratye chalati, ashrit hounee  
kityekaraahatee.  
Dhanya dhanya tumachee keerti, vishwee vistaarlee.  
Kityek dusht sanhaarile, kityekaans dhaake sutale.  
Kityekaans aashray kale, Shiv kalyaan raajaa.

**Tumache deshi vaastavy kele, parantu vartman naaheen khetlen.**

**Rinaanbandhe vismaran kaalen, kaay nerangoon.**

**Sarvagy maandali dharm moorti, saangne kaay tumhaan prati .**

**Dharm sthaapanechee keerti, saambhaal leehee paahije.**

**Uddandraaj kaaran tatwe, tene chit vibhaagle.**

**Prasang nasataa lihilen, kshmaa kelee paahije.**

‘Yogis understand the fundamental principles of philanthropy. Who can compare the virtues of those who work for the welfare of all? Lord Vishnu, Indra, and the righteous kings represent the sustaining powers of this universe. A ruler should be virtuous, powerful, noble, and righteous. He must be pure in heart, generous in spirit, gentle in conduct, and firm in character. Unfortunately, such qualities are rarely seen among rulers today. Because of the wickedness of administrators, purity has been destroyed. Hindu places of worship are being vandalized, and religion itself is under threat. I know that God has granted you the strength to restore faith in our deities and protect Brahmins and cows. I also know that many cunning and selfish men surround you. Yet I see no one other than you capable of defending Sanatan Dharma. Whatever traces of righteousness remain in Maharashtra exist largely because of you, and for this I admire you. It is God’s will that many religious and social works will be carried out through you in the future. I know that you have destroyed many wicked men and provided refuge to countless virtuous people. Though I reside within your kingdom, I have not yet been able to meet you personally because of my constant travels. You are wise enough to understand the meaning of every word of this letter. There is no need for further explanation. It is sufficient to say that you have been chosen by the Almighty to re-establish Dharma. Since you are a king, numerous duties of administration will occupy your mind and time. Therefore always act with deep thoughtfulness and wisdom.’

He sent this letter to King Shiva Ji through one of his most trusted disciples, Shri Diwakar Bhatt Ji. Shri Diwakar Bhatt Ji delivered the letter to King Shiva Ji at his capital.

On receiving the letter of Samarth from Shri Diwakar Bhatt Ji, King Shiva Ji was filled with immense joy and an intense longing to meet Samarth Swami Ji at the earliest opportunity. He therefore requested Shri Diwakar Bhatt Ji to kindly arrange his meeting with Samarth Ji as soon as possible. Shri Bhatt Ji knew that, at that time, Swami Ji would be staying at Khadee Baag, engaged in composing his most important work, the **Dasbodh**. He did not wish to disturb Samarth Swami Ji unexpectedly by arriving with King Shiva Ji without prior intimation. Therefore, he wrote a letter to Samarth Swami Ji and sent it through a trusted companion, seeking his permission.

Swami Ji gladly granted permission to Shri Bhatt Ji to come to Khadee Baag with King Shiva Ji and meet him in person. Upon receiving this permission from Samarth, Shri Bhatt Ji immediately set out on the journey with King Shiva Ji toward Khadee Baag.

When they arrived at Khadee Baag, King Shiva Ji prostrated himself before Samarth Swami Ji Maharaj and offered a coconut as a token of reverence and devotion. Samarth graciously accepted his offering. King Shiva Ji then humbly prayed that Samarth might accept him as his disciple. Samarth Swami Ji consented, accepted him as a disciple, and bestowed Deeksha upon him.

After receiving Deeksha from Samarth, King Shiva Ji longed to remain there for a longer period, to continue receiving his Guru's blessings and to gain deeper knowledge of the sacred scriptures of Sanatan Dharma. But Samarth instructed him to return and continue serving the nation.

Samarth said to him, "O Shivava, your foremost duty is to ensure the welfare of your kingdom, to re-establish Dharma, and to

protect cows and Brahmins. By performing these duties, you shall attain salvation (Moksha). My blessings are always with you. May the Almighty grant you wisdom and courage so that you may faithfully discharge your religious and patriotic responsibilities.”

King Shiva Ji was deeply delighted to hear these nectar-like words from the lips of his Guru, and, obeying the command of Samarth, he returned to the capital of his kingdom.

Although King Shiva Ji physically returned to his capital, his heart remained with Samarth. He felt that he could not live without the daily Darshan of his Guru. He therefore wrote a letter to Samarth, earnestly requesting him to come and stay in the capital.

Samarth replied, “O Shivava, I am a Yogi, and the forest is my natural abode. I cannot accept your request to remain permanently at one place in your capital. However, whenever you call me from a pure heart and seek my help, I shall present myself before you without delay. I also instruct you to accept your mother as your Guru for guidance in your daily life. Worship her every day and offer Naivaidya before beginning your royal duties. Along with my blessings, I am sending you three things: mud, cow dung, and a stone.”

King Shiva Ji could not understand the significance of these three articles sent to him by Samarth. He therefore went to his mother, prostrated before her, informed her of the instructions received from his Guru Samarth to worship her daily and offer Naivaidya before attending to his royal duties, and then, standing before her with folded hands, requested her to explain the meaning of these three gifts.

The royal mother then said to him, “O my son, the mud signifies your love for your Motherland. You must always love your Motherland even more than yourself. The cow dung signifies divine शक्ति and sacred energy, which you possess through the

blessings of Samarth. The stone signifies that you must continue to build and possess as many forts as possible; in other words, you must expand your kingdom in a righteous manner for the protection and promotion of Sanatan Dharma.”

King Shiva Ji now understood the meaning of these three symbolic gifts and the deeper instructions of Samarth. From that moment onward, he continued to labor diligently in order to fulfill the mission entrusted to him by his Guru.

One day, King Shiva Ji received as a gift from one of his fellow kings a basket of very sweet and delicious mangoes. As soon as he saw them, he thought within himself that such delightful fruit ought to be offered to his Guru, Samarth. The very moment this thought arose in his mind, he heard a voice saying:

**शिववा दार उघड़ ।**

**Shivava Daar Ughad.**

Shivava, open the door.

No one ever dared to address King Shiva by the familiar name “Shivava.” At once he understood that his Guru Samarth had come and was standing at the entrance of the palace, asking permission to enter. The king ran toward the gate and indeed found Samarth standing there. He immediately prostrated before him and respectfully invited him inside the palace, praying that he might bless him.

Once inside, King Shiva Ji offered the sweet mangoes to Samarth. Samarth then said to him, “I had told you, Shivava, that whenever you would call me from your pure heart, I would come without delay. I knew that you wished to offer these delicious mangoes to me, and therefore I have come to accept them.”

After eating a few of those sweet mangoes, Samarth prepared to leave the palace. It was already late in the night, and King Shiva Ji requested him to remain in the palace until morning. But Samarth declined the request and departed into the darkness of the night.

King Shiva Ji continued to receive guidance and instructions from Samarth from time to time and faithfully carried on his mission of serving Sanatan Dharma. Once he learned that Samarth was visiting Ramgarhi. Desiring to have Darshan of his Guru, he immediately set out for Ramgarhi. Fortunately, he met Samarth on the outskirts of the place. He prostrated before him and received his blessings. At that time, King Shiva Ji appeared extremely tired and somewhat dull. Swami Ji asked him the reason for his exhaustion.

The king replied, “O Gurudev, by your blessings I lack nothing. Yet perhaps because of thirst I feel weary and fatigued.”

Samarth at once removed a stone lying on the path, and beneath it there emerged a stream of fresh and pure water for all to drink.

Samarth then said, “O Shivava, drink this pure divine water from this stream, and let all your companions drink of it as well. It will restore strength and freshness to all of you.”

That spring still exists to the west of Ramgarhi and is known as **Kubdee Teerth**.

King Shiva Ji repeatedly requested Samarth to accept his hospitality and remain permanently in the fort rather than wandering from place to place. At last, Samarth yielded to his insistence. King Shiva Ji converted the Parli fort into an Ashram for Samarth and gave it the name **Sajjagarh Fort**.

In **Shaka Samvat 1572**, King Shiva Ji began the construction of a very large fort at Samangarh. Thousands of laborers were engaged

in its construction. Seeing this vast project underway, the king began to feel a sense of pride in his achievements, particularly in the thought that he was providing livelihood to so many workers. At that very time, Samarth also arrived at the site of construction. Seeing him, King Shiva Ji prostrated before him. Nothing remains hidden from great saints. Samarth instantly perceived that a subtle feeling of pride had arisen in the king's heart. He knew that such pride was a danger in the spiritual life of a devotee and ought to be removed without delay.

Samarth therefore instructed one of the workers to bring him a stone. When the stone was brought, he ordered that it be split carefully into two equal halves, without causing unnecessary damage. The worker obeyed and broke the stone exactly into two parts. To everyone's astonishment, there was a hollow cavity inside the stone, and within it sat a live frog.

Turning toward the king, Samarth said, "O Shivava, truly you are great. See your power! By your strength this frog has been sustained alive within such a tiny hollow in the stone. Who else on earth could accomplish such a miracle? Who besides you can nourish living beings in this world?"

King Shiva Ji, however, still did not grasp the philosophical meaning of Samarth's words and replied, "Gurudev, I do not understand—how was I giving nourishment to this creature?"

Samarth then said, "O, I had thought that since you believe yourself to be giving livelihood to thousands of workers, perhaps it is also by your power that this small creature remained alive within the stone. But if you do not possess the power to sustain even this one tiny being, how then can you claim the power to provide livelihood to thousands?"

At once the king understood the true meaning of Samarth's words. He fell at his feet and begged forgiveness.

Samarth then spoke to him gently, “O Shivava, we are all servants of the Almighty Lord. We are merely His instruments and carry out only those duties which He assigns to us. When we are thus engaged in His work, we must never allow pride to arise in our hearts over any achievement.”

King Shiva Ji felt deeply ashamed of the pride that had silently entered his heart and vowed never again to commit such an error.

After remaining there for some time and inspecting the work on the fort, Samarth returned to his Ashram at Sajjangarh.

In **Shaka Samvat 1576**, Samarth journeyed to the South of Bharatvarsha and went to Rameshwaram. There he met Shri Madhavacharya Ji Maharaj, who in those days was regarded as a great scholar of Vedanta. Samarth stayed with Acharya Ji for a few weeks and then decided to return to his Ashram at Sajjangarh.

Before reaching Sajjangarh, he resolved to bless King Shiva Ji Maharaj and therefore went to his capital, Sitara. When he arrived at the entrance of the palace of King Shiva Ji Maharaj, he called out for Bhiksha:

**जय जय श्री रघुवीर समर्थ। भिक्षां देही।**

**Jai Jai Shri Raghuvir Samarth. Bhiksha Dehee.**

Victory to the Almighty Lord Ram. Please give me Bhiksha (alms).

King Shiva Ji heard the voice of his Guru and was filled with immense joy. He began thinking about what the most appropriate Bhiksha would be for his revered Guru. Reflecting deeply, he took a piece of paper and wrote upon it: “O Samarth Gurudev, please accept my kingdom as Bhiksha.”

Having written this, he hurried to the entrance of the palace to personally welcome his Guru. Falling prostrate before him with deep devotion, he placed the piece of paper in his hands as Bhiksha.

Samarth blessed King Shiva Ji, then looked at the piece of paper and said, “O Shivava, you have given your kingdom to me. What will you do now?”

King Shiva Ji replied humbly, “Gurudev, I will dedicate my life to serving the lotus feet of my revered Guru.”

Hearing this, Samarth smiled and accompanied him into the palace. After accepting Prasadam, he spoke gently and with great wisdom.

“O Shivava, the Lord has assigned duties to every person according to their education and karmas. Brahmins are meant to study the sacred scriptures of Sanatan Dharma and guide society accordingly. Kshatriyas are meant to defend their kingdoms with a spirit of patriotism and courage. Vaishyas are meant to conduct trade with honesty and purity of heart, earning only reasonable profit for the welfare of society. Shudras are meant to perform work according to their abilities and skills. When individuals perform their prescribed duties in accordance with Sanatan Dharma, they ultimately attain Moksha (liberation).

I am a Brahmin, and my duty is not to administer a kingdom. Just as you have offered your kingdom today, Lord Ram once offered half of his kingdom to Guru Vasishta. Guru Vasishta declined the offer and instead imparted spiritual teachings to Lord Ram, which are preserved in the sacred text *Yoga Vasishta*. Similarly, the great King Janaka once offered his entire kingdom to his Guru, Maharshi Yajnavalkya, who also refused to accept it.

You know that I am a hermit. A kingdom is of no use to me. Accept it back as Prasadam along with my blessings, and continue to rule as my representative. Never allow a feeling of ownership to arise in your heart. Always manage your kingdom as a chief steward. Remember that from this moment onward, your kingdom belongs to me.”

King Shiva Ji immediately prostrated before Samarth and accepted his instruction to govern the kingdom as its chief steward and representative on behalf of Samarth.

He then respectfully said to his Guru, “O Gurudev, you are now the true king of my kingdom. According to your instructions, I shall administer it faithfully. Kindly bless me by giving me your Padukas (wooden sandals), so that I may place them upon the throne.”

Samarth graciously granted his request and gave him his Padukas. King Shiva Ji placed them upon the royal throne and vowed to rule the kingdom as the representative and servant of the true king, Samarth.

He then requested his Guru to provide him with a flag that would represent him. Samarth gave him a piece of saffron-colored cloth and instructed him to use it as his royal flag.

Samarth then explained the significance of the saffron color.

He said, “O Shivava, this color symbolizes **Agni**, the sacred fire. Fire dispels darkness and brings light; therefore, it represents knowledge that burns away ignorance. Fire also signifies the spirit of **Yajna**, the sacred ritual of offering, which is essential for attaining self-knowledge. Being the color of purity, it represents renunciation, purification, and spiritual discipline. The saffron color also symbolizes the quest for the realization of the Supreme Truth.”

Thus King Shiva Ji adopted the saffron flag as the symbol of his kingdom.

After this, Samarth returned to his Ashram at Sajjangarh.

One day, while Samarth was deeply absorbed in meditation, he heard the voice of his mother, Shrimati Renubai.

**माझा नारायण माझ्या अंतकाली समीप नाही।**

**Maajhaa Naarayan Maajhyaa Antkaalee Sameep Nahee.**

My Narayan is not near me at my final moment.

Samarth immediately remembered the promise he had given to his mother that he would come to see her before her passing. Realizing that the time of her Nirvan was near, he set out at once for his native village Jamb. Soon he arrived there.

He went directly to his mother's bedside and spoke gently, "O Mother, look at your son Narayan. I am here. You need not worry about anything now. Mother, you are the embodiment of divine grace. I know that the Lord awaits your presence in Saket Dham. Please proceed to that sacred abode and remain blissful."

Hearing these soothing words from Samarth, Shrimati Renubai opened her eyes and embraced her son.

Then, uttering the sacred words "Shiva, Shiva," she peacefully left her mortal body.

Samarth and his elder brother performed all the funeral rites for their mother according to the traditions of Sanatan Dharma. After remaining in Jamb village for a few days, Samarth returned to his Ashram.

In **Shaka Samvat 1588**, Samarth again visited Mahabaleshwar. At that same time, King Shiva Ji happened to be in the region. On hearing that his Guru had arrived in Mahabaleshwar, the king eagerly set out to obtain his Darshan. Knowing that Samarth always preferred secluded places rather than populated towns, he began searching in the surrounding caves. Eventually he found Samarth residing in one of them.

When he saw him, Samarth appeared to be lying down, groaning in pain due to severe stomach discomfort.

King Shiva Ji immediately requested him to take proper medicine.

Samarth replied, “O Shivava, I have tried many kinds of medicines, but this pain does not subside. There is only one remedy for this illness—the milk of a lioness. That alone will cure me.”

King Shiva Ji responded without hesitation, “Gurudev, if that is the remedy, I shall bring the milk of a lioness for you.”

He immediately set out in search of a lioness.

After several days of searching, he finally discovered two lion cubs inside a cave and concluded that the mother must be nearby. He waited patiently. After some time, the lioness returned. Seeing a human near her cubs, she became furious and attacked him. Although King Shiva Ji possessed the strength to kill the lioness, he had no intention of harming her. His sole purpose was to obtain her milk. If he killed her, how could he milk her?

With great difficulty he survived the attack and climbed to a nearby hill. In his heart he prayed to his Guru for guidance. Suddenly he heard an inner voice:

“O Shivava, go near the lioness gently and stroke her back with affection. Tell her that you have come not to harm her or her cubs, but only to obtain a small quantity of milk as medicine for your Guru.”

Encouraged by this divine guidance, King Shiva Ji approached the lioness fearlessly. He gently stroked her back and said with sincerity, “O Mother, if you wish, you may kill me. I have not come here to harm you or your cubs. I only seek a little milk for my Gurudev as medicine. If you allow me to take the milk and go to him, I promise that I will return afterward, and then you may punish me in whatever way you desire—even take my life.”

Moved by his humility and sincerity, the lioness stood calmly before him like a gentle cow. King Shiva Ji then milked her and carried the milk to his Guru.

Some so-called rationalists may question how a lioness could behave like a gentle cow and allow herself to be milked.

For such people, Samarth’s teaching offers a profound lesson: when one approaches any living being with pure love and selfless intention, one receives love in return. But when one approaches with harmful intent, harm inevitably follows. The soul understands the voice of another soul. Our scriptures declare:

**यदन्यविहितं नेचेदात्मनः कर्म पुरुषः ।  
ना तत्परेषु कुर्वीत जाननप्रियमात्मनः ॥**

**Yadanyavihitam nechedaatmasnah karm puruushah.  
Na tatpareshu kurveet jaananpriyamaatmanah.**

If you do not wish others to behave toward you in a certain way, then you should not behave toward them in that same manner.

The Vedas also instruct us to pray to the Lord for fearlessness.

यतो यतः समीहसे ततो नो अभयं कुरू ।  
शं नः कुरू प्रजायोऽभयं नः पशुभयः ।  
अमृताभिषेकोस्तु शांति शांतिः सुशांतिर्भवतु ॥

**Yato yatah sameehse tato no abhayam kuru.  
Sham nah kuru prajaayoabhayam nah pashubhay.  
Amrataabhishekostu shanti shantih sushantiibhavatu.**

O Lord, bless us with fearlessness in Your universe. May we remain fearless among all living beings, including animals. Grant peace and harmony to all.

King Shiva Ji brought the milk of the lioness to his Gurudev. Samarth embraced his devoted disciple and blessed him with the words:

**छत्रपति भव ।**

**Chatrapati Bhav.**

Become the protector of all righteous beings.

It was **Samwat 1594** when King Shiva Ji wished to launch a campaign against Karnataka. Before undertaking such an important mission, he went to Samarth to seek his permission and blessings. Samarth, however, instructed him to wait for one year and only then proceed with the attack. Obeying the command of his Guru without question, King Shiva Ji postponed the campaign. Accordingly, in **Shaka Samwat 1595**, he marched toward Karnataka. Despite the fact that the enemy's army was several times larger than his own, he achieved a resounding and decisive victory. Why Samarth had advised him to wait for a year was

known only to him, but the result proved to be extraordinarily successful.

After conquering many regions in the South, Samarth ordered that King Shiva Ji should be formally crowned. He directed the royal priest, **Shri Gaga Ji Bhatt**, to organize and conduct the coronation ceremony, conferring upon him the title “**Chatrapati Shiva Ji.**” In **Shaka Samwat 1596**, Shri Bhatt Ji performed the coronation with great grandeur and solemnity. Samarth himself was present to bless Chatrapati Shiva Ji on that auspicious occasion.

Unfortunately, only a few years after his coronation, Chatrapati Shiva Ji began to feel inwardly that he had completed the mission entrusted to him and that the time had come for him to depart for **Saket Dham**. In **Shaka Samwat 1601**, he went to meet Samarth once more. This was to be his final meeting with his Guru. Samarth, who already knew what was to come, blessed him with the words:

**तू या काळचा जनक आहेस ।**

**Too yaa kaalchaa janak aahesh .**

You are the Janak of this age.

Samarth then instructed him from the sacred teachings of Sanatan Dharma and told him that he would soon attain **Nirvana (Moksha)** and would not return again to earthly existence. He advised him to continue chanting the sacred name “**Shiva, Shiva**” and to leave his mortal body in peace.

Chatrapati Shiva Ji returned to his palace. From that time onward, he began donating vast numbers of cows and gold coins every day to the needy. On **Chaitra Shukla 15, Sunday, Shaka Samwat**

**1602**, he peacefully gave up his mortal body while chanting the holy name of **Lord Ram**.

After the passing of his most beloved disciple, Chatrapati Shiva Ji, Samarth withdrew into seclusion and avoided meeting anyone except a few of his closest disciples.

## Nirvan of Samarth Swami Shri Ramdas

After the death of Chatrapati Shiva Ji, Samarth came to **Chafal** in **Shaka Samwat 1603**. Upon arriving at his Ashram there, he secluded himself completely. No one was permitted to see him except two of his devoted disciples, **Shri Uddhav Ji** and **Shri Aka Ji**. He began observing a fast and survived only on a single glass of milk each day. Gradually his body grew weaker day by day.

Shri Uddhav Ji became deeply concerned about the health of his Guru and respectfully requested him to take better care of himself. Samarth replied:

साधुदेह दुःखान्त पडला अथवा श्वानादिक्रीम भक्षिला ।  
प्रशस्त ना वाटावें मनाला, मंद बुद्धी स्तव ॥

**Sadhudeh duhkhanth padla  
athawa shwaanadikeem bhakshilaa.  
Prashast naa vataaven  
manaala mand buddhi stav.**

The body of a saint never suffers even if the dogs eat it. Whoever thinks otherwise is a fool.

When **Ram Navami** approached, Samarth came out of his isolation and addressed his disciples with the following half verse, asking them to complete it. Through this he wished to indicate that he would attain **Nirvana** on the sacred day of Ram Navami.

रघुकुल तिलकाचा वेळ सन्नीध आला,  
तदपरु भजनानें पाहिजे सांग केला ।

**Raghukul tilkaachaa vel sanneedh aalaa,  
tadparu bhajanaanen paahije saank kela.**

The time of the birth of Lord Ram is approaching; therefore we should chant His name together.

Upon hearing this half verse, his devoted disciple **Shri Uddhav Ji** completed it:

**अनुदिन नवमी हे मानसी आठवावी,  
बहुत लगबगीने कार्य सिद्धी करावी ।**

**Anudin Navami hai maanasi aathwaavee,  
Bahut lagbageene kaarya siddhee karavee.**

We should always remember the day of Navami in our hearts and complete our tasks without delay.

Samarth was pleased with this composition of Shri Uddhav Ji and instructed all his disciples to continue chanting the name of **Lord Ram** day and night. The **Kirtan** continued throughout the entire night of **Ashtami**.

On **Ram Navami**, Samarth rose from his bed and sat on the floor among his disciples. He accepted a small quantity of **mishri (sugar)** and **yoghurt** as Prasadam. It appeared that he was experiencing some difficulty in breathing. Seeing this, the disciples began to cry, thinking that their beloved Guru was preparing to leave his body.

Samarth then addressed them with these words:

**आजपर्यन्त आमच्यापाशी राहून रडावयाचेंच सार्थक केलें की काय।**

**Aajparyant aamchaapaashee rahun radaavyaachench  
saarthak kelen kee kaay.**

“After living with me for so long, have you learned nothing except how to cry?”

The disciples replied humbly with folded hands, “O Lord, if you leave us, who will guide us? With whom shall we perform Kirtan?”

Samarth answered:

**ज्यास माझ्या पश्चात बोलावेसे वाटेल, त्याने दासबोध इत्यादी ग्रंथ वाचावेत।**

**Jyaas maajhyaa paschaat bolaavese vaatel, tyane daasbodh ityaadi granth vaachaavet.**

If you wish to communicate with me after I have left this body, read **Dasbodh** and my other scriptures. Reading them will be the same as speaking with me.

After giving these instructions, Samarth chanted the name of **Lord Ram** eleven times and then attained **Nirvana**. This occurred on **Shaka Samwat 1603 (San 1682), Margh Krishna Navami**.

Although Samarth left his mortal body, his mission did not end. It continued through his thousands of disciples and remains alive even today. There were **27 principal disciples** of Samarth, each of whom presided over the respective Math established by him and continued to spread his philosophy of **Sanatan Dharma** and patriotism. Their names are: Shri Swami Kalyan Ji (Domgaon Math), Shri Swami Dattatrey Ji (Shirgaon Math), Shri Swami Vasudev Ji (Karohari Math), Shri Swami Devdas Ji (Dadegaon Math), Shri Swami Uddhave Ji (Takli Math), Shri Swami Diwakar Ji (Chafal Math), Shri Swami Anant Mauni (Karnataka Math), Pundit Shri Viswanath Ji (Haridwar Math), Shri Swami Balkrishna Ji (Barar Math), Shri Swami Yadav Ji and Shri Swami Benimadav Ji (Prayag Math), Shri Swami Janardan Ji (Surat Math), Shri

Swami Shridhar Ji (Ramkot Math), Shri Swami Govind Ji (Goa Math), Shri Swami Shivram Ji (Tailang Math), Shri Swami Shankar Ji (Shreerang Pattan Math), Shri Swami Harischandra Ji (Antarved Math), Shri Swami Ramkrishna Ji (Ayodhya Math), Shri Swami Harikrishna Ji (Mathura Math), Shri Swami Jaykrishna Ji (Mayapuri Math), Shri Swami Ramchandra Ji (Kashi Math), Shri Swami Bhagwant Ji (Kanchi Math), Shri Swami Dayal Ji (Badri Kedar Math), Shri Swami Brahmdas Ji (Onkeshwar Math), Shri Swami Ballal Ji (Jagannath Math), and Shri Swami Hanuman Ji (Rameshwaram Math).

## Few Teachings of Samarth

It is believed that Samarth composed dozens of books containing divine teachings, but unfortunately only a few of them have survived to the present day. These are:

दासबोध, करुणाष्टकः, सुंदरकांड, युद्धकाण्ड , पूर्वारम्भ, अंतर्भाव,  
आत्माराम, चतुर्थमान, पंचमं, मन्पंचक, जनस्वभावगोसावी,  
पंचमासी, सप्तमासी, सगुणध्यान, निर्गुणध्यान, जुनातपुरुष,  
षडरिपुनिरूपण, पंचीकरणयोग, मनाचे श्लोक, श्रीमत दासबोध ।

**Dasbodha, Karunashtakas, Sunderkand, Yuddhakand, Poorvarambh, Antarbhav, Atmaram, Chaturthman, Panchman, Manpanchak, Janaswabhawgosavi, Panchsamasi, Saptsamasi, Sagundhyan, Nirgundhyan, Junatpurush, Shadripunirupan, Panchikaranyog, Manache Shlok, Shreemat Dasbodha.**

Among these works, **Dasbodh** is the most widely studied and is regarded as the great epic composed by Samarth. Following the literary tradition of his time, he composed it in the **Owi** poetic form. The contents of the book are clear, direct, and simple to understand. Dasbodh is divided into **20 major sections**, known as **Dashaks**, and each Dashak contains **10 subsections** called **Samasas**. The total number of **Owis** in Dasbodh is **7751**, and each Owi consists of four lines.

Samarth composed **Dasbodh** after receiving the blessings of **Lord Ram**. Within its verses we find the freshness, fearlessness, and clarity of a soul that has attained supreme knowledge. Some of the wisdom imparted through this sacred text **Dasbodh** is presented below.

## **The Importance of Human Body**

It is extremely rare and difficult to obtain a human body. To be born as a human being is indeed a great blessing. Samarth teaches that one must make proper and meaningful use of this precious human birth.

**धन्य धन्य हा नरदेहा, येथील अपूर्वता पाहो ।  
जो जो कीजे परमार्थलाहो, तो तो पावे सिद्धीतें ॥**

**Dhany dhany haa nardehaa, yetheel apoorvataa paaho.  
Jo jo keeje parmaarthlaaho, to to pave siddheeten.**

We attain a human body as the fruit of good karmas performed in past lives. Having received this human birth through the grace of the Lord, we should strive earnestly to attain the highest spiritual goal.

Samarth explains that the human body is the very means through which worship, knowledge, and realization become possible in this world. He teaches us to dedicate our time, energy, and life toward devotion, service, and communion with the Divine through this body, and thus make our lifespan truly meaningful. The presence of the Lord among us can be recognized only through the human body, which must be used to please Him and attain salvation (Moksha).

**या नरदेहाचेनि सम्बन्धे, बहुत पावले उत्तम पदें ।  
अहंता सांडून स्वानंदे, सुखी झाले ॥**

**Yaa nardehaacheni sambandhe,  
Bahut paavale uttam paden.  
Ahantaa saandoon aanande,  
Sukhee jhaale.**

Samarth teaches that true self-interest can be realized only through the human body. Therefore, one should serve humanity with body, mind, and wealth. Those who fail to do so are like living corpses upon this earth. He warns us not to waste youth in pleasures and idle enjoyments. Old age will surely come one day, and with it many illnesses and weaknesses. At that stage, a person will have to answer for his deeds. When old age arrives, the strength required to pursue the real aim of life will no longer remain. Therefore, one must begin now—while strength and time are still available—to perform noble deeds and actions that please the Lord, which in truth means serving humanity.

देहे ब्रह्मांडाचे, फळ देहे दुल्लाभीच केवळ ।  
परी या देहास , उमजवावे ॥  
असो काहीं एक करणें, कैसे घडे देहाविदे ।  
देहे सार्थकीं लावणे, म्हणजे बरें ॥

**Dehe brahmaandaache phal dehe dullabheech kewal.  
Paree yaa dehyaas, umajvaaven.  
Aso kaheen yek karnen, kaise ghade dehyaavaden.  
Dehe saarthkeen laavine, mhdjen baren.**

Samarth further instructs us to remember the well-known verse from the Vedas:

कराग्रे वसते लक्ष्मीः करमध्ये सरस्वती ।  
करमूले तु गोविन्दः प्रभाते करदर्शनम् ॥

Karaagre Vasate Lakshmi, Karamadhye Saraswati.  
Karamoole Tu Govinda, Prabhaate Karadarshanam.

I focus upon my fingers and visualize the abundant blessings of Goddess Lakshmi, who dwells there. I focus upon the center of my palms and visualize the blessings of Goddess Saraswati, who resides there. At the base of my hands, I visualize the infinite grace

of Lord Vishnu, who dwells there. Therefore, every morning I look upon my hands and seek the manifestations of the Divine within them.

### **Necessity of Self-Confidence, Patience and Efforts**

Once a person approached Samarth and asked, “O Samarth Swami Ji, if a person has neither food to eat nor clothes to wear, neither a roof over his head nor any friend or family, if he is unfortunate and feels completely isolated in a new place where he has no well-wisher or sympathizer, then how can he survive?”

खाया नहीं जेवया नहीं, लेया नहीं नेसाया नहीं ।  
अंधराया नहीं, पांघराया नहीं, कोंपट नहीं अभागी ॥  
सोयरे नहीं धायरे नहीं, इष्ट नहीं मित्र नहीं ।  
पाहतां कोठें, ओळखी नहीं, कायें जीवेंसीं धरावें ॥  
वाचावें का मरावें, कोंड्या प्रकारें ॥

**Khaya Nahin jevayaa nahen,  
leya naheen nesaayaa naaheen.  
Anthraya nahin, panghraayaa naheen,  
Konpat naahee abhagee.  
Soyare naheen dhayare naheen,  
isht naaheen mitra naahen.  
Pahtaan kothen, olakhi naheen,  
kaayen jeevasi dharaayen.  
Vaachaaven kaa maraaven,  
Kondyaa prakaaren.**

Samarth replied:

“O gentleman, under such adverse conditions, one should cultivate patience. One should always entertain positive thoughts. Even in the most difficult circumstances, one should never lose heart or become disturbed. A person must understand that he is merely

passing through a bad phase of time, and that it too shall eventually pass. He should continue to act in good faith while remembering the Lord, without allowing fear to enter his heart. Always remember: it is patience that leads to success. At the same time, maintain confidence in yourself under all circumstances and do not become dependent upon others. The one who can face troubles bravely and act patiently during times of adversity is truly fortunate.”

धीरधरा धीरधरा तकवा, हडबडून गडबडून नका ।  
का देखोनि वर्तावे, सांडावे भय पोटीचे ॥  
धरावा धीर तो मोठा, विचारें पाहतां बरें ।  
अधीर माणसे खोटी, काम काहीं कळेचिना ।  
खादाड आळशी, मंद, सूचना ते कळेचिना ॥  
प्रसंगी चळचळा कापे, तो प्राणी आत्मघातकी ।  
कोणाचा भरवसा न धरावा, आपुला आपण विचार करावा ॥  
तत्वा उदंड धरावा, कोणी एक विषयी ॥  
जो दुसऱ्यावरी विश्वासला, त्याचा कार्यभाग बुडाला ॥  
जो आपणाचि कष्टत गेला, तोचि भला ॥

Dhirdharaa	dhirdharaa		takwaa,
Hadbadoon	gadbadoon		nakaa.
Kaal	dekhoni		vartaven,
sandave	bhay		potiche.
Dharava	dhir	to	motha,
vichaaren	paaataan		baren.
Adhir	mandse		khoti,
kaam	kaaheen		kalechinaa.
Khadaad	alasi,		mand,
soochanaa	te		kalechinaa.
Prasangi	chalchala	a	kaanpen,
to	praanee		aatmghaatkee.
Konacha	bharvasaa	na	dharava,
apula	aapan	vichaar	karaavaa.
Tatwa	udand		dharawa,

<b>konui</b>	<b>ek</b>	<b>vishayi.</b>
<b>Jo</b>	<b>dusanyawaari</b>	<b>vishwaaslaa,</b>
<b>tyachaa</b>	<b>kaarybhaag</b>	<b>budaalaa.</b>
<b>Jo</b>	<b>aapnaach</b>	<b>kashtat</b>
<b>Tochi bhalaa.</b>		<b>gela,</b>

### **You are the Architect of Your Own Life**

Samarth teaches that every person is the architect of his or her own life. Within every individual there operate three qualities or **gunas**—**Tamas** (darkness and inertia), **Rajas** (passion and activity), and **Sattva** (purity and harmony).

A person dominated by **Tamas** becomes quarrelsome by nature. Such a person remains filled with anger most of the time. In anger, he or she loses respect even for mother, father, elders, and wise people. Under its influence, a person performs all kinds of harmful and destructive actions, which ultimately lead to his or her downfall. Such a person loves excessive sleep, lacks compassion in the heart, and may even develop a tendency to harm insects, birds, animals, and fellow human beings without cause. Samarth advises that one should avoid this Tamasic tendency by every possible means.

**शरीरीं क्रोध भरतां, न ओळखे माता पिता ।  
 बंधू बहीण कांता, ताडी तो तमोगुण ॥  
 भरलें क्रोधांचे काविरे, पिशाच्यापारी बावरे ।  
 नाना उपायें नावरे, तो तमोगुण ॥**

**Shereeren krodh bhartaam,  
 n olakhe maata pitaa.  
 Bandhu baheen kantaa,  
 taadee to tamogun.  
 Bharalen krodhaanche kaavire,  
 Pishaachyaapaaree baavare.**

**Naanaa upaayen naavare,  
to tamogun.**

Samarth further says that the person dominated by **Rajoguna** is deeply materialistic. Such a person has little faith in God and remains constantly engaged in actions meant to satisfy ego, ambition, pleasure, fame, and the desire for wealth. He or she begins to believe, “I am the doer,” and thus develops pride. If success continues to come, such a person feels like the happiest being in the world. But if obstacles arise on the path of success, that same person becomes frustrated, agitated, and desperate, and may resort even to improper or illegitimate means in order to overcome difficulties. Such individuals are never truly satisfied in life. No doubt they are energetic and hardworking, but their energies are directed toward the wrong goal. Samarth warns that these Rajasic tendencies too should be restrained and avoided.

मांझे घर मांझा संसार, देव कैसा आणिला थोर ।  
ऐसा करी जो निर्धार, तो रजोगुण ॥  
बरें खावें बरें जेवावें, बरें ल्यावें, बरें नसावें ।  
दुसन्याचे अभिलाषावें, तो रजोगुण ॥  
कैसा धर्म कैसे दान, कैसा जाप कैसे ध्यान ।  
विचारीना पाप पुण्य, तो रजोगुण ॥  
मी तरुण मी सुंदर, मी बलाढ्य मी चतुर ।  
मी सकळांमध्ये थोर, म्हणे तो रजोगुण ॥  
दुसन्याचें सर्व जावें, मांझेचि बरे असावें ।  
ऐसे आठवें स्वभावे, तो रजोगुण ॥  
जें जें दृष्टि पडिलें, तें तें मने मागितले ।  
लाभ्य नसतां दुःख झालें, तो रजोगुण ॥  
टवाळी धरावी निंदा, सांगणे घडें विवादा ।  
हास्य विनोद करीं सर्वदा, तो रजोगुण ॥

**Maajhe ghar maajhaa sansaar**  
**dev kaisaa aanilaa thor.**  
**Eisa karee jo nirdhaar,**  
**to rajogun.**  
**Baren khaaven baren jevaaven,**  
**bare lyaven, baren nasaven.**  
**Dusanyaache abhilaashaaven,**  
**to rajogun.**  
**Kisaa dharma kaise daan,**  
**kaisaa jap kaise dhyaan.**  
**Vichaareenaa paap punya,**  
**to rajogun.**  
**Mee tarun mee sundar, mee**  
**balaadhy mee chatur.**  
**Mee saklaamadhya thor,**  
**mhane to rajogun.**  
**Dusanyaachen sarv jaaven,**  
**maanjhechi bare asaven.**  
**Eise aathaven swabhaven,**  
**to rajogun.**  
**Jen jen drashti padilen,**  
**Ten ten mane maagitale.**  
**Laabhya nastaa dukh jhaalen,**  
**to rajogun.**  
**Tawaalee dharaavee nindaa,**  
**saangne ghen vivaadaa.**  
**Haasya vinod kareen sarvadaa,**  
**to rajogun.**

Samarth teaches that by avoiding both **Tamas** and **Rajas**, we should cultivate **Sattwagun** within ourselves. A person endowed with Sattwagun may outwardly appear to be an ordinary human being engaged in everyday worldly responsibilities, caring for family and profession. Yet such a person performs all actions by offering them to the Lord. He or she constantly strives to perform the highest good (**Parmarth**) for society with a completely selfless

attitude. Such a person remains cheerful, devoted to prayer, and always mindful of the Divine.

A Sattwaguni person is free from greed and does not accumulate wealth unnecessarily. Instead, such a person practices charity and generously helps those in need. If a hungry person arrives at the door, he or she welcomes the guest and offers food with the spirit expressed in the sacred principle:

**अतिथि देवो भव ।**

**Atithi devo bhav.**

The guest is like the Lord Himself.

Such a person is honest and truthful and follows the principles laid down in the scriptures:

**सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात् न ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियं ।  
प्रियं च सूनुतं ब्रूयात् ऐष धर्मः सनातनः ॥**

**Satyam bruyaat priyam bruyaat  
na bruyaat satyamapriyam.  
Priyam cha soonrutam bruyaat  
Esh dharmah sanaatanah.**

One should speak the truth in a pleasant manner and avoid speaking truth that causes unnecessary hurt. The eternal principle of Sanatan Dharma is that truth should be expressed with kindness and consideration.

Samarth further describes the qualities of **Sattwagun** as follows.

ईश्वरी प्रेमा अधिक प्रपंच संपादने लौकिक ।  
 सदा सन्निध्य विवेक , तो सत्वगुण ।  
 परमार्थाची आवडी, उठे भावार्थाची गोडी ॥  
 परपोपकारी तातडी तो सत्वगुण ।  
 देवालागी उपोषण, वर्जी तांबोळ भोजन ।  
 नित्य नेम जप ध्यान, तो सत्वगुण ॥  
 शब्द कठीण ना बोले, अतिनेमेसी चाले ।  
 योगी जेणे तोषविले, तो सत्वगुण ॥  
 शांती क्षमा आणि दया, निश्चय उपजे ज्याला ।  
 सत्यगुण जाणा तया, अंतरी आला ॥  
 आले अतीत अभ्यागत, जाऊ न देयी जो भुकिस्त ।  
 येथांशक्ति जो दान देत, तो सत्वगुण ॥  
 सकळांसीं नम्र बोले, मर्यादा धरुन चाले ।  
 सर्व जन तोषविलें, तो सत्वगुण ॥  
 कोणी एकास मारी, एकास जाउन वारी ।  
 जीव बंधन मुक्त करी, तो सत्वगुण ॥  
 संत देखोनि धावे, परम सुख हेलावे ।  
 नमस्कारी सर्व भावें, तो सत्वगुण ॥

Ishwaree premaa adhik, prapanch sampaadane laukik.  
 Sadaa sannidhy vivek, to satwagun.  
 Parmaarthaachee aavaadee, uthe bhavaarthaachee godi.  
 Parpopkaaree taatadee, to satwagun.  
 Devaalaagee uposhan, varjee taambol bhojan.  
 Nitya nem jap dhyaan, to satwagun.  
 Shabd Katheen na bole, atinemesi chaale.  
 Yogee jene toshvile, to satwagun.  
 Shaanti kshama aani dayaa, nischay upaje jayaa.  
 Satyagun jaanaa tayaa, antaree aalaa.  
 Aale ateet abhyaagat, jaao na deyee jo bhukist.  
 Yethanshakti jo daan det, to satwagun.  
 Saklaanseer namra bole, maryadaa dharun chaale.

**Sarv jan toshvilen, to satwagu.  
Konee ekaas maaree, ekaas jaaon vaaree.  
Jeev bandhan mukt karee, to satwagun.  
Sant dekhoni dhaave, param sukh helaave.  
Namaskaaree sarv bhaaven, to satwagun.**

Samarth teaches that a person can truly shape and elevate his or her life—making it successful, peaceful, and virtuous—by cultivating **Sattwagun** within.

### **Laziness – Biggest Enemy**

Samarth declares that **laziness is the greatest enemy of human beings**. Those who are active and industrious in their lives receive the blessings of **Goddess Saraswati** and **Goddess Lakshmi**. There are no effortless rewards in this world; without hard work one cannot achieve the goals of life.

**आळसांचे फळ रोकडें, जांभया देऊन निद्रा पडे ।  
सुख म्हणों आवडे, आळसी लोकां ॥**

**Aalsaachen phal rokadēn, jaanbhayaa deun nidraa pade.  
Sukh mhnōn aavade, aalasee lokaan.**

There is no doubt that a person must endure physical effort (**Shariirik Kasht**) in order to remain active and productive. Yet such effort alone leads to eventual success.

**साक्षेप करिताम कष्टी, परन्तु पुढे सुरवाडाती ।  
खाती जेवती सुखी होती, येतनेकरूनी ॥**

**Saakshep karitam kashtati, parantu pudhe surwaadatee.  
Khatee jevatee sukhee hotee, yetnekarōoneen.**

Laziness makes the body dull and weak and ultimately harms us. Because of laziness, our efforts fail and our aspirations remain unfulfilled. Laziness is a clear sign of misfortune. Therefore one should remain alert and guard against it.

**आळस उदास नागवणा, आळस प्रेत बुडवणा ।  
आळसें करंटपणाच्या खुणा, प्रकट होती ॥  
म्हणों आळस नसावा, तरीच पाविजे वैभवा ।  
अरत्रीं परत्री जीवा, समाधान ॥**

**Aalas udaas naagwanaa, aalas pretnbudwanaa.  
Aalasen karantpannachyaa khunaa, prakat hotee.  
Mhnon aalas nasaavaa, tareech paavaje vaibhavaa.  
Aratreen paratree jeeva, samaadhaan.**

Samarth further explains that the one who is willing to endure effort and overcome laziness is the one who ultimately enjoys the fruits of success. Those who prefer the comfort of laziness in the beginning eventually suffer later. Those who worked hard attained prosperity and fortune, whereas the lazy wasted their lives in meaningless discussions and idle talk.

**आधी कष्टांचे दुःख सोसिती, ते पुढे सुखाचें फळ भोगिती ।  
आधीं आळसे सुखावती, त्यासी पुढे दुःख ॥  
जेहीं उद्दंड कष्ट केले, ते भाग्य भोगून ठेले ।  
येर ते बोलताची राहिले, करंटे जन ॥**

**Aadhi kashtanche duhkh sositi,  
te pudhe sukhachen phal bhogitee.  
Aadheen aalasen sukhavatee,  
tyasee pudhe duhkh.  
Jeheen uddand kasht kele,  
te bhaagya bhogoon thele.  
Yer te boltaachi raahile,  
karante jan.**

## What should we ask from the Lord?

Samarth teaches that one should never ask the Lord for material prosperity or worldly pleasures. The stories of **Bhasmasur** and **Hiranyakashyapu** serve as examples. They worshipped the Lord with great austerity and devotion, and the Lord was pleased with them. Yet when granted a boon, they asked for powers that were motivated by worldly ambitions and pride, which ultimately led to their destruction.

Therefore, learning from these examples, one should only pray to the Lord for virtues, wisdom, and devotion.

कोमल वाचा दो हे राम, विमल करनी दो हे राम ।  
प्रसंगावधान दो हे राम, कला चातुर्य मुझे दो राम ॥  
हितकारक जो वह दो राम, जनसुखकारक जो वह दो राम ।  
अंतर्मन की परख दो राम, बहुजन मैत्री दो हे राम ॥  
विद्या वैभव दो हे राम, उदासीनता दो मेरे राम ।  
जो मांग पाऊं न वह दो राम, जो समझ सकूं न वह दो राम ।  
प्रीति तुम्हारी दो हे राम, दास कहे मुझे दो हे राम ॥

Komal vacha do he Ram,  
vimal karani do he Ram.  
Prasangaavadhaan do he Ram,  
kalaa chaaturymujhe do Ram.  
Hitkaarak jo vah do Ram,  
jansukhkaarak jo vah do Ram.  
Antarman ki parakh do Ram,  
Bahujan maitree do he Ram.  
Vidyaa Vaibhav do he Ram,  
Udaaseenataa do mere Ram.  
Jo mang paun n a vah do Ram,  
Jo samajh sakun na vah do Ram.  
Priti tumhaari do he Ram,  
Das kahe mujhe do he Ram.

O Lord, grant me the gift of gentle speech and pure actions. Grant me wisdom to act rightly according to circumstances and skill in righteous work. Grant me the ability to do good for society and bring happiness to people. Grant me the capacity to listen to my inner conscience and cultivate friendship with virtuous people. Bless me with knowledge that leads to prosperity and the strength to remain detached from material attachments. O Lord, my mind is limited and cannot fully understand what is best for me. Therefore grant me whatever You know to be truly beneficial. Your humble devotee only asks for Your love and devotion.

# THE SAINT KING (SAMRAT) AGRASEN MAHARAJ



## Introduction

Our elders have always taught us that moral, ethical, and spiritual values are the true wealth of any family. This truth is beautifully reflected in the following couplets:

**When wealth is lost, nothing is lost.**  
**When health is lost, something is lost.**  
**When character is lost, all is lost.**

In the present age, one of the deepest concerns of parents is how to cultivate these moral, ethical, and spiritual values in their children. Unfortunately, because we are all so occupied in striving to cope with the demands of modern life, we often find ourselves with little time to guide the younger generation.

All of us are searching for peace in our lives. Many believe that wealth brings happiness; therefore, they spend their days and nights laboring tirelessly in pursuit of riches. Some think that sensual pleasures are the source of joy. Others believe that status and prestige in society will bring lasting peace, and so they work relentlessly to become famous and respected. In our Scriptures, these material pursuits are symbolically referred to as **Kanak, Kamini, and Kirti**. Yet the truth is that as we struggle harder and harder to gain these things, our peace of mind gradually diminishes, and our desires only grow stronger. Instead of giving us peace, these very pursuits become sources of unrest and sorrow. Since the beginning of creation, most human beings have remained unhappy for one reason or another. Only a rare few great souls can truly claim to be inwardly content in all circumstances. We should therefore try to understand how such exalted souls attained peace and happiness, and attempt to follow their example in our own lives.

For this reason, the present generation should make time for their children and impart to them moral, ethical, and spiritual values by narrating the lives of great souls. In doing so, children may at least begin to walk upon the path of such noble personalities, and through that path discover true happiness and peace of mind.

The merciful Almighty is indeed ever compassionate. From time to time He continues to send great souls to this earth in order to teach humanity the path of peace and happiness. These great beings incarnate as human beings, passing through the same struggles and hardships of life that we ourselves endure. Therefore, we cannot dismiss them by saying that they possessed mysterious powers while we are merely ordinary human beings. One such great soul, who appeared on earth approximately 5,200 years ago, was the noble saint-king **Samrat Agrasen Ji Maharaj**. Historians have described his genealogy in detail, but, in our opinion, they have not sufficiently brought out his teachings of morality, spirituality, and peace, which deserve far greater emphasis.

If one carefully studies the life of the great saint Samrat Agrasen Maharaj, one will find that every action of his life was dedicated to the welfare of the world. He was not merely the founder of the **Agrawal Samaj**, as many remember him today, but was also a great defender of Sanatan Dharma and a shining embodiment of truth, morality, and compassion. If we follow his example in our day-to-day life, we too can attain happiness and peace. His own teaching reminds us:

**चिन्नोपि रोहति तरुः, क्षीणोप्युपचीयते पुअनचंद्रा ।  
इति विमृशांतः संताः, सन्तप्यन्ते न विपुलता लोके ॥**

**Chinnoapi rohati taruh, kshinoapyupachheyate  
puanchandra.  
Iti vimshantah santah santpyante n vipuluta loke.**

Even after being cut, the tree becomes green again. The moon, though reduced to a tiny form in Krishna Paksha Prathama, continues to grow until it reaches fullness on Purnima. In the same way, one should never be afraid of difficulties, for they too shall pass away.

Our Scriptures say that if the life-story of saint Samrat Agrasen is read or listened to at least once a year, especially on his Jayanti, it brings peace, joy, and relief from suffering. The Scriptures also declare that Samrat Agrasen is immortal by the boon of his Spiritual Master, **Maharishi Garg Acharya**, and that when he is remembered and invoked with devotion, he appears in subtle form to bless his devotees. May the great soul Samrat Agrasen shower his blessings upon you and your families.

## Genealogy

The great saint-king **Samrat Agrasen Maharaj** is revered as the **34th descendant of Emperor Kush Maharaj**, the son of Lord Rama. Thus, he belongs directly to the illustrious **Bharat** and **Suryavansh** lineage.

After Lord Rama completed His earthly mission and departed from this world, His kingdom of Ayodhya was divided into two parts: the kingdom of **Northern Kaushal** and the kingdom of **Eastern Kaushal**. Emperor **Lav** was enthroned over one part and made **Lavnagri** his capital, which is known today as **Lahore**. Emperor **Kush** was enthroned over the other part and made **Kushawati** his capital, which is known today as **Kushinagar** near Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, India.

In the Suryavansh line of Lord Rama and Emperor Kush were born many great, righteous, and powerful rulers such as **Atithi**, **Nishadha**, **Nala**, **Nabha**, **Pundreek**, **Dhruvensen**, **Sudarshan**, and others. In this very lineage was also born **Samrat Vallabhsen Maharaj**, the father of Samrat Agrasen Maharaj.

कीर्तिमान्तो ही मान्धाता, दिलीपोथा भागीरथा ।  
रघु ककुत्स्थ सागरो मरुत्तो नृप् राघवा ॥

**Kirtimantō hi māndhātā, dilīpōtha bhagīratha.**  
**Raghu Kakutstha Sagarō maruttō nr̥pa rāghava.**

According to the great Hindi literary figure **Shri Bhartendu Harishchandra (1850–85)**, who himself belonged to the Agrawal community, the genealogy of Samrat Agrasen Maharaj is as follows.

The great Emperor **Sudarshan Maharaj** of the Bharat and Suryavansh lineage had a heroic son, **Emperor Agnivarna**. After

the death of Emperor Sudarshan Ji Maharaj, Agnivarna continued the rule over Kushawati. Emperor Agnivarna had five sons, among whom one was **Prince Shighra**, who later ascended the throne.

In the same lineage were also born **Samrat Mohandas Maharaj** and **Samrat Neminath Maharaj**. Samrat Mohandas was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu in His **Rangnath** form, reclining upon the great serpent **Adishesh**. He constructed several temples of Lord Rangnath on the banks of the Kaveri River.

Samrat Neminath, according to tradition, founded the kingdom of Nepal many centuries ago. His son, **Samrat Vrand**, laid the foundation of **Vrindavan**. He established the idol of **Goddess Vrinda** and built her temple there.

In the Suryavansh dynasty of Emperor Kush, the **30th descendant** was **Samrat Vishwsaha**. His son, **Samrat Prasenjit**, built the unconquered state of **Pratapnagar**. Prasenjit had a brave son, **Samrat Vrishatsen**, who was a great warrior and expanded his kingdom across what are now the regions of Haryana and Rajasthan. Samrat Vrishatsen had a son named **Samrat Vallabhssen**, who in turn became the father of the most revered **Samrat Agrasen Maharaj**, founder of the Agrawal/Vaishya Samaj.

The genealogy of Samrat Agrasen, as preserved in the Scriptures, is given below. Lord Rama had two sons, Emperor Lav and Emperor Kush. Samrat Agrasen belonged to the lineage of Emperor Kush.

#### Genealogy of Emperor Kush

1. Atithi
2. Nishadh
3. Nala
4. Nabha

5. Pundarika
6. Kshemandhava
7. Dewaneek
8. Ahinagu
9. Ruru
10. Paripatra
11. Bala
12. Uktha
13. Vajranabh
14. Shankh
15. Vyusitasva I
16. Vyusitasya II
17. Hiranyabha
18. Pusya
19. Dhruvasandhi
20. Sudarshan
21. Agnivarna
22. Shighra
23. Maru
24. Prususurita
25. Susandhi
26. Amarsa
27. Mahashwat
28. Vishok
29. Vishrutavant
30. Vishwsaha
31. Presnjit
32. Vrahtsen
33. Vallabhsen
34. Agrasen

## Parents

Samrat Agrasen Maharaj was born at the beginning of **Kaliyug**, nearly 5,200 years ago, to **Samrat Vallabhshen Maharaj** and **Queen Bhagwati Devi**. The kingdom of Samrat Vallabhshen in those days was regarded as a true **Ram Rajya**. He was immensely beloved by his subjects and was widely popular throughout his realm. There was neither misery nor poverty in his kingdom, and no one could be considered destitute.

He was deeply religious, peace-loving, compassionate, charitable, kind to animals, and affectionate toward his subjects.

Samrat Vallabhshen had a younger brother named **Prince Kundsén**. His commander-in-chief was the mighty warrior **Keshi**, who was a disciple of **Lord Balram**. Because of his own greatness and the valor of Keshi, the kingdom of Samrat Vallabhshen was powerful and secure. No enemy dared cast an evil eye upon it.

Unfortunately, for a long time Samrat Vallabhshen and Queen Bhagwati remained without children. The ministers of his court requested him to marry again, as it was customary among kings of that era to have several queens. But Samrat Vallabhshen refused. He declared that he was a descendant of **Suryavanshi Lord Rama**, who had set before the world the noble example of having only one wife.

Thereafter, Samrat Vallabhshen and Queen Bhagwati approached their revered Spiritual Master, **Maharishi Garg Acharya Ji**, seeking his guidance so that they might be blessed with children.

Maharishi Garg, also known as **Gargacharya**, was the Spiritual Master of **Lord Krishna**. The Scriptures narrate that Maharishi Garg, the priest of Lord Shiva, incarnated upon earth at the command of Lord Shiva, who informed him that Lord Vishnu

would soon descend as Lord Krishna and that Garg would be needed in **Braj Bhumi** to guide Him during His formative years and eventually arrange for His education under the great Guru **Sandipani Ji Maharaj**.

The father of Samrat Vallabhsen, **Samrat Vrahatsen**, had once met Maharishi Garg in **Hastinapur**, where the sage had been invited to take part in a religious ceremony organized by **Bhishma Pitamah**. Samrat Vrahatsen was so deeply impressed by the divine personality of Maharishi Garg that he fell at his feet and humbly requested him to accept him as a disciple and guide him and his kingdom along the path of righteousness and Dharma.

Pleased with his humility, Maharishi Garg accepted him as his disciple and became his Spiritual Master. Later, upon the advice of Maharishi Garg, Samrat Vrahatsen renounced his kingdom and accepted **Sanyas** after ruling Pratapnagar for many years. Maharishi Garg then enthroned **Prince Vallabhsen** as ruler of Pratapnagar. Thus, Maharishi Garg continued as the Spiritual Master of Samrat Vallabhsen as well. Under his guidance, Vallabhsen united many smaller kingdoms and became emperor over a larger domain, including **Ballabgarh**.

When Samrat Vallabhsen and Queen Bhagwati came to Maharishi Garg seeking the blessing of progeny, he instructed them to worship **Lord Shiva** together. After many years of austerity and devotion, Lord Shiva became pleased with them and appeared before them. Being omniscient, Lord Shiva understood their desire and granted them the boon of **two sons**. In due time, the royal couple was blessed with two sons: **Prince Agrasen** and **Prince Sursen**.

Maharishi Jaimini narrated to the great Emperor **Janamejaya Ji Maharaj**, son of Emperor Parikshit, as follows.

**भगवत्तयां वल्लभना प्राप्तो वंसकारः सुता ।  
मनुसयाग्र्यस्य यस्यासित कांतिसचंद्रसमो यथा ॥**

**Bhagavattyām vallabhēna prāptō vanśakara: Suta.  
Manuṣyāgr̥yasya yasyāsīt kāntiscandrasamō yathā.**

Queen Bhagawati Devi gave birth to a son from the great and noble soul Vallabhasen. That son was radiant like the moon.

Because of the close relationship between Samrat Vrahatsen and the great Bhishma Pitamah of Hastinapur, his son Samrat Vallabhsen also became a good friend of the Pandavas. The great Bhishma Pitamah loved King Vallabhsen just as he loved his own grandsons. Through this close association with the Pandavas, Samrat Vallabhsen also came into the company of another great sage of that era, Maharishi Ved Vyas. Once, the demon king Sahashtrarjun destroyed the hermitage of Maharishi Parashar, the father of Maharishi Ved Vyas. Then, at the request of Bhishma Pitamah, Samrat Vallabhsen led an army against Sahashtrarjun, defeated him in fierce battle, and restored the hermitage of Maharishi Parashar. The Scripture narrates that the conflict between the two was intense, and Sahashtrarjun was ultimately forced to flee from the battlefield, enabling Samrat Vallabhsen to re-establish the sage's hermitage.

During the reign of Samrat Vallabhsen, the great war of Mahabharata broke out between the two branches of the Kuru family, the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Both sides sent invitations to kings throughout the world, requesting them to join the war on their respective sides. Since Samrat Vallabhsen was a close friend of Pandava Yudhishtira, the Pandavas sent an emissary to invite him to fight on their side, and Samrat Vallabhsen accepted the invitation.

Samrat Vallabhsen came to Kurukshetra with his army and with his son, Prince Agrasen, to support the Pandavas in the great war. During his absence at Kurukshetra, he temporarily entrusted the care of his kingdom to his brother, Prince Kundsens.

Samrat Vallabhsen fought valiantly in the war, but on the tenth day of the great battle he was martyred by the mighty Bhishma Pitamah. The young Prince Agrasen was overwhelmed with grief at the death of his father. At that time, Lord Krishna Himself consoled him and imparted to him the wisdom of the Gita. After the conclusion of the Mahabharata war, Pandava Yudhishtira was enthroned as the ruler of Hastinapur. Emperor Yudhishtira honored the young Prince Agrasen and sent him back to his kingdom with many gifts and much wealth.

## Birth and Education

According to historians, Samrat Agrasen was born in **4250 BC**, on the first day of **Ashwin Shukla Paksha**. This day was also the first day of **Navratri**, and therefore **Samrat Agrasen Jayanti** is celebrated every year on the first day of Navratri.

On the eleventh day after his birth, the name-giving ceremony was performed. The chief Brahmin (Purohit) gave the child the name **Agrasen**. The word “**Agra**” in his name was deliberately chosen by the Purohit so that the child, in the course of his life, might surpass all limits in the knowledge of **Shastras** as well as in the science of weapons. The word “**Agra**” thus symbolized excellence, superiority, and the power to go beyond.

अतीतयैकादशाहमं तू नामकर्म तदाभावत ।  
अग्रसेन इति प्रीता पुरोधाम् नाम चाकरोत् ॥  
श्रुतिशास्त्रे शास्त्रे च परेषामं जीवने तथा ।  
चक्रे धातोरर्थयोगाद् अग्रनाम्नामसंभवम् ॥

Atītyaikādaśāham tu nāmakarma tadābhavat.  
Agrasēna iti prīta: Purōdhā nāma cākarōt.  
Śrutēṭha śāstrē śāstrē ca parēṣām jīvanē tathā.  
Cakrē dhātōrarthayōgād agranāmnāmasambhavam.

In ancient India, it was the noble tradition, in the interest of true education, to send princes and princesses away from home to a **Gurukula**, where all students—whether royal or ordinary—lived equally in the Ashram of the Guru. In keeping with this sacred custom, Prince Agrasen was sent at the age of six to the hermitage of **Guru Maharishi Tandavya**, which was situated near the holy city of Ujjain.

During his formative years in the Gurukula, Prince Agrasen excelled both in physical strength and in intellectual brilliance.

Under the guidance of his Guru, he remained humble, obedient, truthful, and deeply rooted in righteousness. He completed his education at the age of fourteen.

During his stay with Guru Maharishi Tandavya, Prince Agrasen learned the virtues of humility and obedience. The Scripture teaches that education gives rise to humility; humility brings worthiness; worthiness leads to wealth; and wealth, when used rightly, should support religiousness (Dharma), which in turn grants fulfillment. Prince Agrasen was therefore instructed in the principles necessary to establish peace and security in his kingdom and in the world, and to work always for the welfare of all.

Guru Maharishi Tandavya imparted to him education in many dimensions of a Kshatriya king's life. According to Maharishi Jaimini, Prince Agrasen received the following branches of knowledge from Maharishi Tandavya:

**Advaita Vedanta:** This gave Prince Agrasen an understanding of the true aim of life and the wisdom needed to attain liberation from the cycle of birth and death (Moksha).

**Brahma Vidya:** Prince Agrasen mastered the entire body of Vedic knowledge together with its inner mysteries, as prescribed in the Scriptures. He learned the six disciplines mentioned in the **Mundaka Upanishad**—**Shiksha** (Phonetics), **Kalpa** (Ritual), **Vyakarana** (Grammar), **Nirukta** (Etymology), **Chandas** (Metrics), and **Jyotisha** (Astrology).

**God-Realization:** Prince Agrasen described worldly learning as **Apara Vidya** and spiritual wisdom as **Para Vidya**.

**Astra Vidya:** During his stay at the Gurukula, Prince Agrasen became proficient in all forms of weapon training.

Prince Agrasen is quoted in Scripture as saying:

“I understood through my revered Guru, Maharishi Tandavya Ji, that the Vedic Sanatan Dharma is the most ancient culture and the true religion. I learned the importance of Gurukul education and the sacred lineage of the Guru-disciple tradition. As a student in the Gurukul, I paid full attention to the teachings of my Guru and followed faithfully all the principles of the Guru-disciple relationship taught in the Vedas. I learned to be alert like a crow, who is always aware of everything around it; to have concentration like a crane, who stands motionless until the right moment; to sleep lightly like a dog, who awakens instantly at the slightest movement; to eat only in moderation, filling half the stomach with food, one quarter with water, and leaving the remaining quarter empty; and to renounce attachment to home and family.”

**काक चेष्टा, बको ध्यानम, स्वान निद्रा तथैव च ।  
अल्पाहारी, ग्रह त्यागी, विद्यार्थी पंच लक्षणम ॥**

**Kaka Cheshtha Bako Dhyanam,  
Swana Nindra Tathaiva Cha.  
Alpahari Graha Tyagi,  
Vidyarthi Pancha Lakshanam.**

“I learned that success in life depends upon strict obedience to the Guru. Above all, I understood that devotion, obedience, and service (**Seva Bhav**) to the Guru alone bring the highest knowledge through his blessings.

I also mastered all branches of weaponry.”

Maharishi Jaimini, in his conversation with Samrat Janamejaya, the son of Samrat Parikshit, further states that Samrat Agrasen Maharaj learned from his Guru Maharishi Tandavya the knowledge of various celestial weapons described in the **Rig Veda**. These weapons were not only immensely powerful, but also capable of protecting one against the attacks of enemies.

**Hiranyastra:** Astra of Indra's Vajra.

सो अस्य वज्रो हरितो या आयसो हरिर्निकामो हरिरागाभस्तयोः ।  
द्यूम्नी सुशिप्रो हरिमन्यूसायका इन्द्रे नि रूपाहरिता मिमिक्षीरे ॥

**So asya vajro harito ya aayaso harirnikaamo  
hariraagabhastyoh.**

**Dyumnee sushipro harimanyusaayaka indre ni  
roopaaharitaa mimikshire.**

Hiranyastra is the metallic thunderbolt golden Astra. Effulgent with strong teeth, it has the power to destroy enemies with its golden rage.

**Marutastra:** Weapon of the Maruts.

वाशीमनता रष्टिमांतो मनीशिनः सुधन्वाना इशुमंतो निषंगिहाह ।  
स्वश्वा स्था सुरथाः पृश्निमातरः स्वायुधा मरुतो याथना शुभम ॥

**Vaasheemanta rshthimanto maneeshinah sudhanvaana  
ishumanto nishangihah.**

**Svashvaa stha surathaah prshnimaatarah svaayudhaa  
maruto yaathanaa Shubham.**

This is armed with daggers of wisdom, spears, quivers, arrows and auspicious bows.

**Vidyastra:** Weapon of intellect.

इन्द्र क्रतुम ना आ भरा पिता पुत्रेभ्यो यथा ।

**Indra kratum na aa bhara pitaa putrebhyo yathaa.**

This gives wisdom as a father gives wisdom to his sons.

**Agni Astra:** The weapon of fire.

जातवेदसे सुनवामा सोमं अरातीयतो नि दहाती ।  
वेदा सह नह पशति अति दुर्गाणि विश्वा सावेव  
सिंधुम दुरहितात्यग्निः ॥

**Jatavedase sunavama somam arateeyato ni dahaati.**  
**Vedaa sah nah parshat ati durgaani vishvaa saaveva**  
**sindhum durhitaatyagnih.**

This consumes the wisdom of enemies and takes away all troubles and difficulties. This has the power to destroy enemies and take through all difficult situations, material, spiritual, physical, and astral.

**Brahma-astra:** The weapon of self-wisdom.

अहम् मनुर अभावं सूर्याश चाहम कक्षीवां ऋषिर अस्मि विप्रः ।

**Aham manur abhavam sooryash chaaham kaksheevaam**  
**rshir asmi viprah.**

This is as powerful as Surya, the Sun God.

**Vira Jayastra:** Weapon of heroes for victory over enemies—  
whether demonic, human, or other animate forces.

विश्वजिते धनजिते स्वार्जिते सत्राजिते नृजिता उर्वराजिते ।  
अश्वजिते गोजिते अबजिते भरेन्द्राय सोमं यजताया हरयतम ॥

**Vishvajite dhanajite svarjite satraajite nrjita urvaraajite.**  
**ashvajite gojite abjite bharendraaya somam yajataaya**  
**haryatam.**

This weapon symbolizes conquest in many forms—it is the conqueror of the universe, the conqueror of the self, the victor over wealth, and the triumphant force upon the battlefield.

**Kali Jayastra:** Mantra for success in gambling.

उता प्रभामतिदिव्या जयाति कृतं यच्छाघनी विचिनोतिकाले ।  
यो देवकामो ना धना रुणद्धि समित तम रायास्रजाति स्वधावान ॥

**Uta prahaamatideevyaa jayaati krtam yacchvaghnee  
vichinotikaale.  
Yo devakaamo na dhanaa runaddhi samit tam raayaasrjati.**

Through celestial intelligence, this mantra is said to bring victory in games of chance.

**Indrastra:** Weapon of Indra.

सत्यमित तन ना त्वावाननयो असतीन्द्र देवो ना मर्त्यो ज्यायान ।  
वास्तोष पते ध्रुवा स्थूणामसत्रं सोम्यानां द्रप्सो भेत्ता पुराम  
शाष्वतीनामिन्द्रो मुनीनां सखा ॥

**Satyamit tan na tvaavaananyo asteendra  
devo na martyo jyaayaan.  
Vaastosh pate dhruvaa sthooNaamsatram somyaanaam  
drapso bhettaa puraam shashvateenaamindro muneenaam  
sakhaa.**

This is the powerful Astra of Lord Indra. None among gods or mortals is considered equal to this mighty weapon.

**Asurastra:** Weapon to destroy demons.

तप्तं रक्ष उबजातं न्यर्पयतम व्रषणा तमोवृधः ।  
परा सरणीतामचितो नयोशतं हतम नुदेथाम नि शीषितमत्रिणः  
(स्वः) ॥

**Tapatam raksh ubjatam nyarpayatam vrshanaa tamovrdhah.  
Paraa srneetamachito nyoshatam hatam  
nudethaam ni shisheetamatrinah (swaha).**

This Astra is described as the destroyer of demonic forces and hostile enemies.

**Pramohana-astra:** Weapon to induce sleep.

सहस्रश्रृं गो वृषभो यः समुद्रादुदाचरत ।  
तेना सहस्येना वयं नि जणां स्वापयामासी ॥

**Sahasrashrn go vrshabho yah samudraadudaacharat.  
Tenaa sahasyena vayam ni janaan svaapayaamasi.**

This Astra has the mystical ability to cause enemies on the battlefield to fall into deep sleep.

**Gauradevi Astra:** Wrathful weapon of the Goddess.

उता सया नाह सरस्वती घोरा हिरण्यावर्तनिह वृत्रघ्नी वष्टि सुष्ठुतिम।

**Uta syaa nah sarasvatee ghoraa  
hiranyavartanih vritraghnee vashthi sushtthutim.**

This is the celestial and fearsome Astra of the Divine Mother, known for destroying obstacles and hostile forces.

**Pashupata-astra:** Weapon of Pashupati or Rudra.

त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगंधिम पुष्टिवर्धनम् ।  
उर्वारुकमिवबंधनां मृत्योर्मुक्षीया मामृतात् ॥

**Tryambakam yajaamahe sugandhim pushtthivardhanam.**  
**Urvaarukamivabandhanaan mrytormuksheeya maamritaat.**

Through the worship of the three-eyed Lord (Tryambakeshwar), this Astra brings prosperity and liberation.

**Shakti-astra:** Weapon of power, associated with Indra's Shakti.

त्वं शतान्यवा शंबरस्या पुरो जघनताप्रतिनि दस्योः ।  
अशिक्षो यात्रा शच्या शाकीवो दिवोदासाया सुन्वते  
सूतकरे भरद्वाजाय गृणते वसूनी ॥

**Tvam shataanyava shambarasya puro**  
**Jaghanthaaprateeni dasyoh.**  
**Ashiksho yatra shachyaa shaceevo divodaasaaya**  
**sunvate sutakre bharadvaajaaya grnate vasooni.**

This Astra possesses the power to destroy the impregnable cities of evil forces.

**Chakrastra:** The chakra weapon.

अवर्तयत सूर्यो ना चक्रम भिनद वलमिन्द्रो अंगिरसवां ।

**Avartayat sooryo na chakram bhinad valamindro**  
**angirasvaan.**

This Chakra weapon, radiant like the Sun, possesses the power to destroy all enemies.

Ashwini-shakti-astra: Weapon possessing mystical powers or siddhis.

**प्राचीमु दीवाश्विना धियम मे अम्रधराम सातये कृतं वसूयूम ।  
विश्वा आविष्टं वाजा आ पुरंधीस्ता नाह शक्तं शचीपति शचिभिः ॥**

**Praacheemu devaashvinaa dhiyam me.amrdhraam saataye  
krtam vasooyum.  
Vishvaa avishtam vaaja aa purandheestaa nah shaktam  
shacheepatee shacheebhiih.**

This Astra fills the warrior with elevated spirit and courage upon the battlefield.

**Kavacha mantra:** Mantra of armoury (kavacha).

**बृहस्पतिरणः परी पातु पश्चादतोत्तरसमादधारादागायोह ।**

**Brhaspatirnah pari paatu  
pashchaadutottarasmaadadharaadaghaayoh |**

This Brihaspati Astra is believed to protect the warrior from fear, danger, and harm.

After completing his education at the age of fourteen, Prince Agrasen returned to his kingdom of Pratapnagar. Soon thereafter, Samrat Vallabhsen declared him the Crown Prince.

As the heir to the throne of the Pratapnagar kingdom, Prince Agrasen began assisting his father in the daily responsibilities of governance. He devoted himself to strengthening national pride, unity, and loyalty among the people. By bringing together individuals from all sections of society, he promoted stability, harmony, and continuity within the kingdom.

In addition to performing other important royal responsibilities, he was appointed **Commander-in-Chief of the army** by the king. The extensive knowledge of weaponry he had acquired during his education at the Gurukul of Maharishi Tandavya proved immensely valuable in strengthening the military power of the kingdom and introducing advanced weapon systems into the army.

When Crown Prince Agrasen reached the age of sixteen, the great war of **Mahabharata** was declared between the two cousins, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, for the throne of Hastinapur. As previously mentioned, Maharaja Yudhishthira invited Samrat Vallabhsen to support the Pandavas, since they shared a close friendship. King Vallabhsen accepted the invitation and prepared to march toward the battlefield of Kurukshetra along with Crown Prince Agrasen and the royal army led by the great warrior and commander-in-chief, **Senapati Kesi**.

Although Samrat Vallabhsen agreed to take Crown Prince Agrasen with him to the battlefield, he did not initially wish for him to take part in the actual combat.

**सत्यधर्माभिरक्षार्थं पुत्र गच्चा ममानया ।**

**Satyadharmābhirakṣārtham̐ putra gaccha mamājñayā.**

Maharaja Vallabhsen said, “Dear son Agrasen, according to the laws and traditions of the court, it is not appropriate for you to fight in the war, for you are only sixteen years old and still too young to enter the battlefield.”

However, Queen Bhagawati embraced her son and persuaded her husband Samrat Vallabhsen to allow the young prince to participate in the great war of Mahabharata for the protection of righteousness and truth.

Mother Queen Bhagwati (Vidarbhanandini) spoke the following words when she saw the intense desire of Crown Prince Agrasen to participate in the war.

**सत्यार्थे धर्मकामार्थे त्वयासम्याग्रा सपुत्रिका ।**

**Satyārthē dharmakāmārthē tvayāsmyagra saputrikā.**

She guided him to uphold righteousness and to follow his conscience, blessing him with the words, “Return to the kingdom victorious.”

According to the historical narratives, Crown Prince Agrasen fought with remarkable courage throughout the great Mahabharata war, standing alongside **Abhimanyu**, the valiant son of the great Pandava warrior Arjuna.

On the tenth day of the great Mahabharata war, when his father Samrat Vallabhsen was engaged in fierce combat against the mighty Kaurava commander Bhishma Pitamah, he was fatally wounded by the powerful arrows of the great Bhishma Pitamah.

## Tenth Day of the Great War Mahabharata

On the tenth day of the Mahabharata war, the Pandavas arranged their forces with great strategic care. **Shikhandi** was placed at the head of a division of the army, protected by the mighty warriors **Arjuna, Bhima, and Vallabh**sen, to confront the formidable **Bhishma Pitamah**. Behind them stood the five sons of Draupadi, **Abhimanyu, and Agrasen**. Supporting them were several great warriors (Maharathis), including **Satyaki, Chekitana, Dhristadyumna, Virata, Drupada, the five Kaikeya brothers, Dhristaketu, and Uttama**ujas.

The Kaurava army also prepared for battle with equal determination. At their forefront stood the mighty **Bhishma Pitamah**, while behind him were the sons of **Dhritarashtra**. Supporting them were renowned warriors such as **Dronacharya, Ashvatthama, Bhagadatta, Kripa, Kritavarman, Sudakshina, Jayatsena, Shakuni, and Brihad**vala. Following them were countless soldiers, numbering in the millions, eager to engage in battle.

Soon the two mighty armies charged toward each other. The clash of weapons and armor created a thunderous uproar across the battlefield. Shikhandi advanced against the grandsire and released three arrows that pierced Bhishma's chest. However, Bhishma Pitamah did not retaliate with weapons; instead, he simply destroyed Shikhandi's arrows. The grandsire firmly refused to fight Shikhandi. Though Shikhandi showered him with arrows again and again, Bhishma would not raise his weapons against the son of Drupada.

Addressing Shikhandi, Bhishma said, "Whether you strike me first or not, I will never fight you. You were born a woman, and I shall never challenge one who was born as a woman and later changed form."

Shikhandi replied with determination, “O great Bhishma, I know well that you possess the power to destroy the entire Kshatriya race, and that you once defeated even the mighty Parashurama. Yet I shall fight you and bring about your death. Whether you choose to strike me or not, you will not escape with your life. Prepare yourself, O Bhishma, for the next world.”

Ignoring Shikhandi, Bhishma Pitamah turned his attention toward the armies of the **Somakas** and **Shrinjayas**. Fighting with unmatched energy, he slew **ten thousand elephants and ten thousand horsemen**. On that day alone, the grandsire killed **two-hundred-thousand-foot soldiers**. Despite this terrible slaughter, the Pandavas did not waver. With raised weapons, they advanced fearlessly, determined to confront the mighty Bhishma.

Witnessing the devastating prowess of Bhishma, **Arjuna** turned to **Vallabhsen** and said, “O great warrior, confront Bhishma in battle. Do not feel even the slightest fear for your life. I stand behind you.”

Encouraged by Arjuna’s words, **Samrat Vallabhsen**, followed by **Dhristadyumna, Abhimanyu, and Agrasen**, rushed toward the grandsire, unleashing their powerful weapons.

On that day, Bhishma Pitamah continued his fierce destruction of the Somakas and Shrinjayas. Meanwhile, Vallabhsen and Arjuna together cut down hundreds and thousands of enemy chariot warriors, horsemen, and infantry. The battlefield became a terrible sea of bloodshed on both sides, making it impossible to determine which army would ultimately prevail. Bhishma Pitamah blazed through the Pandava forces, scorching both Vallabhsen and the Pandava army with relentless fury.

At one point, seeing **Yudhishtira** nearby, Bhishma Pitamah addressed him, saying, “O Yudhishtira, listen carefully to my words and grant me this request. For many days I have slain

countless divisions of soldiers. O Bharata, I no longer desire to continue protecting this body. If you truly wish to fulfill my desire, then slay me as I stand upon my chariot. Place Shikhandi and Partha at the forefront of your army, and allow me to ascend to the heavenly realms.”

Understanding the grandsire’s intention, Yudhishtira ordered the **Shrinjaya army**, led by **Dhristadyumna**, to advance against Bhishma. At the same time, **Arjuna and Vallabhshen** began releasing deadly arrows toward the grandsire. Within a short time, Bhishma killed **fourteen thousand chariot fighters**. In response, **Duryodhana** advanced to protect Bhishma and commanded his warriors to kill **Arjuna and Vallabhshen**.

As the enemy warriors rushed forward, Arjuna invoked his celestial weapons, causing terrible destruction among them. His divine arrows severed heads, arms, and legs of the advancing enemy soldiers by the thousands. Enraged by the prowess of his grandson, Bhishma Pitamah invoked a celestial weapon and rushed toward Arjuna before the assembled warriors. However, when he saw **Shikhandi standing in front**, he withdrew the blazing weapon.

The great Bhishma then concentrated on destroying the **Somakas, Shrinjayas, and Vallabhshen**. Single-handedly he killed **ten thousand elephants** and **seven great Rathis** among the Panchalas and Matsyas. He then sent **ten thousand horsemen and five thousand infantry soldiers** to the abode of Yamaraja. Having greatly thinned the ranks of the Pandava army, Bhishma next slew **Sahtanika**, the brother of King Virata. His feats on that day of the Kurukshetra war were extraordinary, and no warrior could easily stand before him.

The warriors of the Pandava side—including **Drupada, Dhristadyumna, Nakula, Sahadeva, Virata, Abhimanyu, Agrasen, Satyaki, the sons of Draupadi, Ghatotkacha, Bhima,**

**and Kuntibhoja**—were overwhelmed by the terrible power of the grandsire. At that moment, **Vallabhsen** came to their rescue. Encouraging the warriors, he slew hundreds of soldiers who were supporting Bhishma.

Soon the great **Adhirathis** and **Maharathis** of the Pandava army launched a collective attack upon Bhishma, hoping to bring him down. Keeping **Shikhandi** in the front, they showered the grandsire with countless arrows. Shikhandi continued piercing him, but Bhishma ignored him and penetrated deep into the enemy ranks. **Samrat Vallabhsen** advanced and attacked the son of Ganga directly. Enraged, Bhishma seized a dart and hurled it with tremendous force toward Vallabhsen. Vallabhsen was grievously wounded by this attack.

Meanwhile, the other warriors intensified their assault upon Bhishma. Vallabhsen regained consciousness and resumed fighting alongside **Arjuna**. They struck Bhishma again and again across his body, yet the son of Ganga remained unmoved. Returning their arrows, he continued afflicting the Pandava ranks.

Shikhandi and Arjuna maneuvered their chariots close to Bhishma. Arjuna cut Bhishma's bow and then severed the banner upon his chariot. Bhishma picked up another bow, but Arjuna quickly shattered that as well. Repeatedly Arjuna cut every bow Bhishma raised, and eventually the grandsire no longer desired to fight Arjuna directly. Arjuna then pierced him with hundreds of arrows as Bhishma stood upon his chariot.

Seeing **Dushasana** nearby, Bhishma said, "Behold how the great bowman Arjuna pierces me with thousands of arrows. Even the combined forces of the gods and the Asuras cannot subdue me—what then to speak of ordinary warriors? Yet these arrows that strike my body are not Shikhandi's but Arjuna's. Only he can cause me such pain. These arrows strike like thunderbolts and burn

like deadly poison as they enter deep into my body. None other than the wielder of the Gandiva bow could inflict such wounds.”

Saying this, Bhishma hurled a dart toward Arjuna, but **Partha** cut it to pieces. Bhishma then took up a sword and shield, but Arjuna shattered both of them. This extraordinary feat astonished everyone on the battlefield.

At that moment, **Yudhishthira** once again urged **Vallabhsen**, “Advance toward the son of Ganga without fear.”

Encouraged by these words, Vallabhsen and the Pandava army attacked Bhishma with renewed vigor. Arjuna released hundreds of arrows that pierced every part of the grandsire’s body. Indeed, there remained scarcely even two fingers’ breadth of space upon Bhishma’s body that was not struck by arrows. Yet the grandsire continued fighting relentlessly.

During this fierce exchange, Bhishma’s arrows **fatally wounded Samrat Vallabhsen**. Seeing the valiant warrior fall, Bhishma Pitamah paused momentarily and paid his final respect to him, with tears in his eyes.

Soon afterward, the aged grandsire himself fell from his chariot. Great cries of lamentation rose from the Kaurava army. When Bhishma fell, it seemed as though the very hearts of the Kauravas had fallen with him. It appeared as if a celestial being had descended from the heavens. Bhishma lay upon the ground with his head facing east. Because his body was pierced with countless arrows, it did not touch the earth, forming instead a **bed of arrows**. At that moment, Bhishma appeared almost divine. The clouds released a gentle rain and the earth trembled.

Seeing her son lying upon the battlefield, **Ganga** sent sages in the form of swans. Circumambulating him, they requested him not to abandon his body until the Sun entered its **northern course**.

Bhishma replied, “I shall not give up my life while the Sun travels southward. I will depart from this world only when the Sun begins its northern journey.”

The celestial swans returned to the heavens and conveyed Bhishma’s decision to Goddess Ganga.

When the foremost warrior of the Kuru dynasty had fallen, both armies ceased fighting. The Pandavas and Shrinjayas roared loudly like bulls, while the Kurus were filled with grief. **Duryodhana** and **Kripa** wept with anguish. **Duhshasana** rushed to inform **Dronacharya** of Bhishma’s fall. Hearing the dreadful news, Drona fainted from his chariot. Upon regaining consciousness, he ordered his troops to stop fighting.

Both the Pandavas and the Kauravas laid aside their weapons and approached Bhishma. Standing before him with folded hands, they offered their obeisance.

Bhishma spoke to them gently, “Welcome, O great heroes. I am pleased to behold you all before I depart from this world.”

Since Bhishma’s head was hanging down without support, he asked the warriors to bring him a pillow. They quickly brought fine pillows made of silk. Bhishma smiled and said, “O kings, this is not a pillow worthy of a warrior.”

He then addressed **Arjuna**, saying, “O Dhananjaya, give me a pillow that you think appropriate.”

With tears in his eyes, Arjuna strung his bow and shot arrows into the ground beneath Bhishma’s head, forming a pillow of arrows. Resting his head upon it, Bhishma said, “You have given me a bed and pillow worthy of a Kshatriya. This is how a warrior should lie upon the battlefield. Upon this bed I shall remain until the Sun enters its northern course.”

When Crown Prince **Agrasen** heard of the death of his beloved father **Samrat Vallabh**, he was deeply grieved. **Lord Krishna** consoled him and described the courage with which his father had fought against the grandsire.

Lord Krishna said to Agrasen, “Maharaj Vallabh will be remembered forever as a great martyr. Do not lament for him. He sacrificed his life for righteousness and truth, and his name will endure as long as the earth exists.”

The great war of Mahabharata continued for **eight more days**. Prince Agrasen bravely fought on the side of the Pandavas throughout those days after the death of his father.

After the war concluded and **Yudhishtira** was crowned king of Hastinapur, he specially summoned **Prince Agrasen** to his royal court and honored him, saying:

**कुमारस्याग्रसेनस्य युद्धेपश्यमम महाबदलाम  
पितुर्वेदना सन्ताप्तोप्यःअंश्चा शतशोप्यरीन ।**

**Kumārasyāgrasēnasya yud’dhēpaśyaṃ mahabdalam  
Piturvadhēna santaptōpyahaṅśca śataśōpyarīn.**

“I witnessed the bravery of Agrasen upon the battlefield of the great Mahabharata war. I observed his strength, his skill in warfare, and his noble character. Even when grief and anger filled his heart due to the death of his father, he spared the lives of warriors who begged for mercy and did not attack hundreds of unarmed soldiers. Agrasen is truly a **Dharmaveer**, a warrior who follows the righteous principles of war.”

**कृपाविष्टेन मनसा युद्धक्षेत्रागतोप्यासौ ।  
अग्रसेणास्त्वयामं धन्यो येनात्मविजयः कृता ॥**

**Kṛpāviṣṭhena manasā yud'dhakṣētragatōpyasau.  
Agrasēnastvayaṁ dhan'yō yēnātmavijaya: Kṛta.**

With the good wishes and blessings of Lord Shri Krishna, and with the affection of the Pandavas, the young crown prince prepared himself to return to his kingdom. At that time, Lord Krishna requested Maharishi Garg to look after him and provide him with all spiritual and material guidance for the success of his future life.

Maharishi Garg said, "Agrasen is very dear to me. His grandfather became my disciple. I guided both his grandfather and his father toward great glory. Certainly, I shall now guide him too, so that he may attain the highest success in life, both spiritually and materially. He must now return to his kingdom. Unfortunately, on his return he may have to face the harshest circumstances. But he is a Kshatriya and a disciple of Maharishi Tandavya. I bless him that he shall not lose heart and will surely emerge from this misery. I shall wait for him to come to my Ashram for further guidance."

## Return to the Kingdom, Imprisonment and the Escape

As stated earlier, when Samrat Vallabhsen, accompanied by his crown prince Agrasen and the army led by the commander-in-chief Kesi, went to fight in the great Mahabharata war on behalf of the Pandavas, he entrusted the administration of the kingdom to his younger brother, Prince Kundsens, during his absence. But when Kundsens heard that both Samrat Vallabhsen and the great army chief Kesi had attained martyrdom on the tenth day of the war, he declared himself the king of Pratapnagar.

Kundsens and his sons were wicked, irreligious, cruel, and deeply selfish. Having usurped the throne, Kundsens became a tyrant and dictator. He cared neither for the sentiments of his ministers nor for the feelings of his subjects, and treated them merely as instruments for the fulfillment of his selfish desires. He began persecuting and killing all those who opposed him and all who had remained faithful to Samrat Vallabhsen.

He imprisoned Queen Bhagwati Devi, and when Crown Prince Agrasen returned to the kingdom after the victorious conclusion of the Mahabharata war, Kundsens ordered his newly appointed army chief to imprison him as well.

Historians state that the great warrior Prince Agrasen was fully capable of defending himself and could easily have slain the soldiers sent to capture him. He was well versed in the use of many mighty celestial weapons. Yet he did not resist, for he feared that any such attempt might place his mother in even greater danger.

Mother and son were now both subjected to severe hardship in prison. Queen Bhagwati Devi, already shattered by the death of her husband, soon fell gravely ill. The **Rajvaidya** (royal physician) pleaded with King Kundsens to allow her to be

transferred to his **Vaidyashala** (Ayurvedic hospital), where she might receive proper care and recover. Somehow Kundsens agreed, and he also permitted Prince Agrasen to accompany her there so that he might serve his mother. However, he posted ten trusted and powerful soldiers to guard the Vaidyashala heavily, ensuring that neither mother nor son could escape.

At this critical moment, a loyal army officer named **Shri Sumit**, who had remained faithful to the late great king Vallabhsen, came forward to rescue them.

Maharishi Jaimini described to the great Emperor Janamejaya the condition of the room in the Vaidyashala where Queen Bhagwati Devi and Prince Agrasen were kept by the wicked King Kundsens. They were confined in a small, windowless chamber that scarcely received any sunlight. When winter approached, however, Kundsens permitted the door to remain open so that the warmth from the fire burning in the adjacent hall might enter and keep the queen and her son alive.

Shri Sumit then prepared a careful and daring plan of escape.

First, he arranged a chariot drawn by strong and swift horses. For several weeks before the actual escape, this same carriage arrived every afternoon at the Vaidyashala. It carried a minister and his wife—both secretly faithful to the late King Vallabhsen, though outwardly they had gained the trust of King Kundsens. They would arrive, alight from the chariot, and enter the Vaidyashala, pretending that they had come to inspect whether the prisoners were securely guarded and whether any chance of escape existed. After remaining inside for about fifteen minutes, they would leave and depart. As the weeks passed, the soldiers guarding the Vaidyashala grew accustomed to the carriage and ceased to pay much attention to it.

Under Shri Sumit's direction, several loyal subjects of the late king took up residence in houses near the Vaidyashala so that they could keep watch over the escape route. It was arranged that if all was proceeding successfully, one of them would begin playing a harmonium from an open window. But if any trouble arose, the music would stop.

On the chosen afternoon, the escape was carried out with exact precision. First, Shri Sumit and his companions hired all the nearby chariots on the pretext of attending a wedding, so that the soldiers guarding the Vaidyashala and the authorities would have no ready means of rapid pursuit.

Then, as usual, the chariot carrying the faithful minister and his wife arrived. They entered the room where Queen Bhagwati Devi and Prince Agrasen were confined. Hidden in a bag, they had brought clothes resembling their own, and they quickly asked the queen and the prince to change into those garments.

At the same time, another loyal supporter, disguised as a peasant, sat near the curb and began eating berries from a bag, all the while observing the progress of the operation. It had been arranged that if he threw the berry stones to the right, it would mean that the soldiers had been disarmed; if to the left, the attempt was still in progress.

Meanwhile, a young man loyal to the late King Vallabhsen, dressed as a high-ranking official, approached the guards and inquired whether they knew of a particular resident living nearby. As he appeared to be an important administrative officer, the soldiers could not ignore his request. Two of them accompanied him to help locate the residence. Once they had gone a safe distance away, this disguised loyalist killed both soldiers.

At the same time, another faithful supporter disguised as an intoxicated peasant entered the stable where the horses of the

Vaidyashala were kept. He mixed an intoxicating herb into their fodder so that they would become drowsy and useless in any pursuit. Then he began shouting loudly that the horses appeared to be ill. Hearing the commotion, two soldiers rushed toward the stable to investigate. There, concealed from sight, the loyalist killed both of them as well.

At that very moment, the faithful minister began fighting with the remaining six soldiers. He was joined by Prince Agrasen, while from the gate of the Vaidyashala, Shri Sumit himself came forward in support. Together, they succeeded in killing all six guards.

Queen Bhagwati Devi and Prince Agrasen then hurried out of the room and reached the gate of the Vaidyashala, where the waiting chariot stood ready. From one of the nearby houses, the harmonium began to play, signaling that all was proceeding according to plan.

Then Queen Bhagwati Devi, Prince Agrasen, and Shri Sumit quickly entered the carriage, each holding a club in hand in case further fighting became necessary. The chariot immediately sped away at full pace.

At last, the chariot reached the Ashram of **Maharishi Garg** near the **Ishtwati River**. Thus, Queen Bhagwati Devi and Crown Prince Agrasen escaped from the imprisonment of the cruel usurper, King Kundsens. Maharishi Garg warmly welcomed both mother and son and assured them that Crown Prince Agrasen would soon regain his kingdom and be enthroned as the rightful king of Pratapnagar. Prince Agrasen bowed and worshipped the holy feet of his spiritual master, Maharishi Garg.

ॐ अखण्डमण्डलाकरम व्याप्तं येन चराचरम ।  
तत्पदं दर्शितं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः ॥

**Om akhandmadalakaram vyaptam yen characharam.  
Tatpadam darshitam brahm tasmaiy shree guruve namah.**

I bow to that glorious Guru, who has revealed to me the state which is the form of the undivided, unbroken, infinite, and all-pervading Universe, extending through both the sentient and the insentient.

## Prayer to Goddess Lakshmi and New Kingdom

The monk-physicians of the Ashram treated Queen Bhagwati Devi with great care, and she soon recovered. Thereafter, Maharishi Garg instructed Prince Agrasen to meditate upon and invoke **Mother Goddess Lakshmi**.

Maharishi Garg imparted to him the sacred teaching of the **Shri Sukta**, the devotional hymn dedicated to **Goddess Lakshmi**, the divine Mother of wealth, abundance, prosperity, and fertility. Maharishi Garg said that, for the worship of Goddess Lakshmi, there is no hymn equal to the **Shri Sukta**.

Prince Agrasen chanted this hymn and meditated upon Mother Goddess Lakshmi for several years at a place chosen for him by Maharishi Garg.

अथ श्री सूक्तं

ॐ हिरण्यवर्णा हरिणीं सुवर्णरजतस्रजाम् ।  
चन्द्रां हिरण्मयीं लक्ष्मीं जातवेदो म आ वह ॥ (१)

ॐ तां म आ व ह जातवेदो लक्ष्मीमनपगामिनीम् ।  
यस्यां हिरण्यं विन्देयं गामश्च पुरुषानहम् ॥ (२)

Ath Shree Sooktam

Śrīm Hiraṇya varnām hariṇīm suvarna-rajata-srajām  
Chandráṁ hiranmayīm lakshmīm jatavedo ma avaha. (1)

Hrīm Tām ma ávaha játavedo lakśhmīm anapa gáminīm  
Yasyám hiraṇyam vindeyam gám ásvam puruśhán aham. (2)

O God Agni, with your prayers, I invoke the Goddess Lakshmi, who shines like gold, yellow in hue, wearing garlands of gold and silver, blooming like the moon, the very embodiment of wealth. O

Agni, invoke for me that unfailing Goddess Lakshmi, blessed by whom I shall obtain wealth, cattle, horses, and noble people.

ॐ अश्वपूर्वा रथमध्यां हस्तिनाद्प्रमोदिनीम् ।  
श्रियं देवीमुप ह्वये श्रीर्मा देवी जुषताम् ॥ (३)

ॐ कां सोस्मितां हिरण्यप्राकारामार्द्रां ज्वलन्तीं तृप्तां तर्पयन्तीम् ।  
पद्मेस्थितां पदमवर्णां तामिहोप ह्वये श्रियम् ॥ (४)

**Om Aśhwa-pūrvām ratha-madhyām  
hastinādaprabódhinīm  
Śhriyam devīm upahvaye śhrír ma  
deví jushatám. (3)**

**Om kām sósmitám hiranyaprakáramárdrám jvalantím  
triptám tarpayantím.  
Padmesthitám padmavarnám támihópa hraye śhriyam. (4)**

I invoke Goddess Shri (Lakshmi), who is preceded by rows of horses, surrounded by chariots, and awakened by the joyful trumpeting of elephants, resplendent in divine glory. May that divine Goddess Lakshmi graciously bless me! I invoke the Goddess Shri (Lakshmi), who is the embodiment of bliss, adorned with a gentle and pleasant smile, and whose radiance shines like burnished gold. I invoke the Goddess Lakshmi, who blazes with splendour, fulfils all desires, and grants satisfaction to her devotees. She who is seated upon the lotus and whose beauty resembles the lotus itself—unto that Goddess Lakshmi I offer my invocation.

ॐ चन्द्रां प्रभासां यशसा ज्वलन्ती श्रियं लोके देवजुष्टामुदाराम् ।  
तां पद्मिनीमीं शरणं प्र पद्मे अलक्ष्मीर्मे नश्यतां त्वां वृणे ॥ (५)

ॐ आदित्यवर्णे तपसोऽधि जातो वनस्पतिस्तव वृक्षोऽथ बिल्वः ।  
तस्य फलानि तपसा नुदन्तु या अन्तरा याश्च बाह्य अलक्ष्मीः ॥ (६)

Om Chandráṃ prabhásám yaśhasá jvalantím śhriyam lóke  
Devjushtanudaaraam.  
Tám padminim-ím saranam aham prapadye' alakshmír me  
naśyatám tvám vrne. (5)

ॐ Ādityavarne tapasódhijátó vanaspatistava  
vrikshó'tha bilvah.  
Tasya phalani tapsá nudantu yaa antara yaasch  
báhya alakshmih. (6)

I take refuge in the Goddess Lakshmi in this world, who shines like the moon, radiant with brilliance and glory, celebrated for her splendour, adored even by the gods, generous and noble like the lotus. May all my misfortunes perish! I surrender myself to You, O one who shines with the radiance of the Sun. By your power and splendour, sacred plants such as the bilva tree have flourished. May the fruits of such sacred austerity remove all inauspiciousness arising both from the inner organs and from the outer senses.

उपैतु मां देवसखः किर्तिश्च मणिना सह ।  
प्रदुर्भुतोऽस्मि रास्ट्रेऽस्मिन् कीर्तिमृद्धिम ददातु मे ॥ (७)

क्षुत्पिपासामलां ज्येष्ठमलक्ष्मीं नाशयाम्यहम् ।  
अभूतिमसमृद्धिं च सर्वां निर्गुदं मे गृहात् ॥ (८)

Upaitu mām deva-sakah kirtishcha maninā saha.  
Prádūrbhūtó'smi rashtre smin kirtimriddhim dadātu me. (7)

Kshutpipásáamalám jyesthámalakshmím  
náshayámyaham.  
Abhūtimasamriddhi cha sarvám nirnuda  
me grihat. (8)

O Goddess Lakshmi, I humbly seek your blessings. May Lord Shiva and Lord Kubera—the Lord of Wealth and Fame—come to me and bestow upon me prosperity and renown. With devotion, I strive to destroy all forms of inauspiciousness and evil. O Goddess Lakshmi, kindly drive away from my home all poverty, misfortune, and lack of prosperity.

गन्धद्वारां दुराधर्षं नित्यपुष्टं करीषिणीम् ।  
ईश्वरीं सर्वभूतानां तामिहोप हवये श्रियम् ॥ (९)

मनसः काममाकूतिं वाचः सत्यमशीमहि ।  
पशुनां रूपमन्नस्य मयि श्रीः श्रयतां यशः ॥ (१०)

Gandhadvārām durādharṣhām nitya-pushtām karīshinīm.  
Iśhvarīgm sarvabhūtānām tāmihóp havaye  
shriyam. (9)

Manasah kāmamākūtīm vācah satyamashímahi.  
Paśhūnām rūpamannasya mayi śrīh shrayatām  
yaśhah. (10)

I invoke Goddess Lakshmi (Shri), whose presence is perceived through fragrance, who cannot be overcome by any force, who is ever prosperous and full of auspicious qualities such as truth, and whose grace is seen abundantly even in the sacred remains of cows. She is the sovereign of all beings. O Goddess Lakshmi, may we obtain the fulfilment of our desires and intentions, may truth abide in our speech, and may we be blessed with cattle, abundance of food, prosperity, and enduring fame.

कर्दमेन प्रजा भूता मयि संभव कर्दम ।  
श्रियम वासय मे कुले मातरं पद्ममालिनीम् ॥ (११)

आपः सृजन्तु स्निग्धानि चिक्लीत वस् मे गृहे ।  
नि च देवीं मातरं श्रियं वासय मे कुले ॥ (12)

**Kardamená praja bhūtá mayi sambhava kardam.  
Śriyam vásaya me kule mātaram padmamáliním. (11)**

**Āpah srijantu snigdhan i chiklita vasa me grihe.  
Ni cha devīm mātaram śhriyam vásaya me kule. (12)**

O Goddess Lakshmi, through Kardama you have created progeny. Therefore, O Kardama, dwell within me and bring the grace of the Divine Mother Lakshmi into my lineage. Adorn the Mother Goddess Lakshmi, who is decorated with garlands of lotuses, and establish her presence in my family. May the sacred waters create harmony and auspiciousness. O Chiklita, born of Shri, reside in my home and ensure that Divine Mother Lakshmi forever abides within my lineage.

आर्द्रां पुष्करिणीं पुष्टिं पिंडगलां पदमालिनीम् ।  
चन्द्रां हिरण्मयीं लक्ष्मीं जातवेदो म आ वह ॥ (१३)

आर्द्रा यः करिणीं यष्टिं सुवर्णां हेममालिनीम् ।  
सूर्यां हिरण्मयीं लक्ष्मीं जातवेदो म आ वह ॥ (१४)

**Ardám pushkariním pushtim pingalám padmamáliním.  
Chandráam hiranmayím lakshmi játavedó ma ávaha. (13)**

**Ārdhám yah kariním yashtim suvarnám hemamáliním.  
Sūryám hiranmayím lakshmi játavedó ma á ha. (14)**

O Agni, invoke for me the Goddess Lakshmi, who shines like gold, who radiates like the sun, who is fragrant with divine aroma, who holds the rod of sovereignty, and who embodies supreme rulership. She is adorned with radiant ornaments and is the divine Goddess of wealth. Invoke for me, O Agni, that Goddess Lakshmi who

shines like gold, glows like the moon, is anointed with fragrant perfumes, is adorned with lotuses raised by celestial elephants in worship, who nourishes all beings, whose complexion is golden, and who is decorated with garlands of lotuses.

तां म आवह जातवेदो लक्ष्मी मन पगामिनीम् ।  
यस्यां हिरण्यं प्रभूतं गावो दास्योऽश्वान् विन्देयं पुरुषानहम् ॥ (१५)

यः शुचिः प्रयतो भूत्वा जुहुयादाज्यमन्वहम् ।  
सूक्तं पञ्चदशर्चं च श्रीकामः सततं जपेत् ॥ (१६)

**Tám ma ávaha játevedó lakshímí man pagáminím. Yasyám  
hiranyam prabhūtam gávó dásyóashván vindeyam  
purushanaham. (15)**

**Yah shuchih prayato bhutwaa juhuyaadaajymanvaham.  
Sooltam panchdasharcham ch shrikaamah satatam japet.  
(16)**

Those who, after purifying themselves both bodily and mentally, offer ghee in the sacred fire and constantly chant this fifteen-versed hymn with the desire for prosperity shall be blessed with the grace of Goddess Lakshmi. O Agni, invoke for me the Goddess Lakshmi, who is unfailing and ever-present. By her grace, may I obtain abundant wealth, cattle, servants, horses, and noble people.

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

**Om Shántih, Shántih, Shántih.**

Pleased with the devotion and sincere prayers of Prince Agrasen, Mother Goddess Lakshmi appeared before him and granted him a divine boon. She assured him that she would always remain present in his lineage. She then revealed to him that at the very

place where he had been meditating there lay a hidden treasure of gold.

Mother Goddess Lakshmi said, “This treasure once belonged to the great Emperor Maru, the twenty-third descendant of the illustrious Emperor Kush and one of your ancestors, who had performed the great Ashwamedh Yagya. During his reign, a severe earthquake occurred, and his immense treasure became buried here beneath the earth. You may now excavate it and use it to establish a new kingdom in accordance with the guidance of your spiritual master, Maharishi Garg.”

After discovering this hidden treasure, Prince Agrasen, with the guidance of his revered Guru Maharishi Garg and with the assistance of the Guru’s disciples, established a new city called **Agranagar** and founded his new kingdom there.

Maharishi Jaimini describes this city to the great Emperor Janamejaya as a city of dreams.

Its magnificent buildings were constructed of sandstone with dark wooden carvings and linings. The charming city was surrounded by a fortified wall adorned with precious stones of various kinds. Within its walls stood numerous beautiful houses, crossroads, bustling bazaars, elegant streets, and graceful lanes, all decorated in splendid fashion. The city possessed multitudes of elephants, horses, mules, chariots, and well-trained troops of soldiers. Groves and orchards, gardens and parks, lakes and wells added to its beauty and charm. Mighty wrestlers, endowed with mountain-like strength, resided there and practiced their skills in many arenas, grappling with one another and challenging rivals to contests of strength.

After Maharishi Gargacharya formally enthroned him as the ruler of the splendid kingdom of Agranagar, the expansion of Samrat Agrasen’s kingdom continued steadily. He conquered many

smaller states and kingdoms and granted democratic rights to their citizens. These territories included Hisar, Hansi, Tosam, Sirsa, Narnol, Rohtak, Panipat, Jind, Kathal, Meerut, Saharanpur, Jagadhari, Nabha, Amritsar, Alwar, Udaipur, and several others. He also marched upon his ancestral kingdom of Pratapnagar and defeated the wicked King Kundsens.

Samrat Agrasen then established a democratic system of governance in his kingdom. He formed a government in which the people played an important role in appointing ministers and determining the governing legislation. He granted freedom of speech to all citizens, ensured equality among them, and personally looked after the welfare of his people.

The political structure of his kingdom guaranteed democratic rights to all citizens, and slavery did not exist within his domain. Women were also included in political participation and were given a respected place in the social and administrative life of the kingdom.

Samrat Agrasen continued to invite migrants from neighbouring states and kingdoms to settle in his prosperous land. Maharishi Garg bestowed upon these newcomers the title “**Vaishya.**” The word “Vaishya” is derived from the Sanskrit language and, in this context, signifies a migrant who settles and contributes to the growth of society.

To support these new settlers, Samrat Agrasen initiated a noble custom. Every new migrant family entering the kingdom was provided with one brick and one gold coin by the king himself, and also by every household in the kingdom. It is said that there were nearly one hundred thousand households in his realm. Thus, when a new family arrived, the king personally welcomed them, and each household offered one brick and one gold coin. In this way the new family received one hundred thousand bricks to build their home and one hundred thousand gold coins to establish their

livelihood, ensuring that they could begin their life in the kingdom with dignity, security, and prosperity.

## Marriage

The Spiritual Master, Maharishi Garg, advised Samrat Agrasen to marry **Princess Madhavi**, the daughter of **King Nagraj Mahidhar** of Manipur.

Once, during one of his customary journeys through eastern India, Maharishi Garg arrived in the kingdom of King Nagraj Mahidhar of Manipur. The king welcomed the Maharishi with heartfelt reverence and worshipped him with devotion. The young Princess Madhavi too bowed at his lotus feet. Then King Nagraj Mahidhar, with folded hands, humbly prayed, “O Maharishi, you are omniscient and travel through many kingdoms of the world. Surely you know who would be the most worthy groom for my beautiful daughter. Kindly guide me.”

Maharishi Garg then said to the king, “O noble king, although there may be many princes and kings in the world desirous of your daughter’s hand, none is equal to **Samrat Agrasen of Agroha**. He has been blessed by **Mother Goddess Lakshmi** herself, who appeared before him. By her grace, he has established the great kingdom of **Agroha** in northern India. By his devotion, he has also pleased **Lord Shiva** and received from Him the boon of victory.”

On hearing these auspicious and noble words from Maharishi Garg, the beautiful Princess Madhavi inwardly gave her heart to Samrat Agrasen Maharaj.

Maharishi Garg then advised King Nagraj Mahidhar to organize a **Swayamvar** for his daughter and to invite all the kings of the world, including Samrat Agrasen of Agroha. Let Princess Madhavi choose her own husband and garland Samrat Agrasen in the presence of all assembled rulers.

Following the advice of Maharishi Garg, King Nagraj Mahidhar arranged the Swayamvar of his daughter and invited kings from all directions, including Samrat Agrasen. Samrat Agrasen, in obedience to the instruction of his Spiritual Master, attended the Swayamvar of the beautiful Princess Madhavi. Many kings from across the world came to that assembly, among them even **Indra**, the king of the Devas. In the Swayamvar, Princess Madhavi chose Samrat Agrasen and garlanded him as her husband before the gathered kings. This marriage beautifully united two distinct lineages and cultures, for Samrat Agrasen was a **Suryavanshi Arya**, while Princess Madhavi belonged to the **Naagavanshi** lineage.

Indra, the king of the Devas, had himself been captivated by the beauty of Princess Madhavi and had desired to marry her. Therefore, he became extremely jealous and enraged when she chose Samrat Agrasen, and he resolved to take revenge. Indra, being also the **Lord of Rain**, ensured that no rainfall reached the kingdom of Agroha. As a result, a severe famine descended upon the land. Samrat Agrasen then waged war against Indra and forced him to flee the battlefield.

Maharishi Garg declared that Samrat Agrasen was able to triumph over Indra because he stood for **Dharma**, and both **Lord Shiva** and **Mother Goddess Lakshmi** were on his side. His army was able to overpower the mighty forces of Indra and compel them to retreat. Faced with this humiliation, Indra approached **Devarishi Narada**, the celestial sage, and requested him to mediate between himself and Samrat Agrasen. Devarishi Narada then succeeded in negotiating peace between the two.

Samrat Agrasen, desiring lasting peace and the ending of all enmity, went with Queen Madhavi to the holy city of **Kashi** and undertook penance to propitiate **Lord Shiva**. Pleased by the severe austerities of Samrat Agrasen, Lord Shiva appeared before him and granted him the boon of enduring peace.

It is worth especially noting here the compassion of Samrat Agrasen and Queen Madhavi. During the famine, they opened the royal stores of grain to the suffering public. Once Queen Madhavi learned that the chief royal cook had secretly preserved some food for the royal family alone. She immediately summoned him and instructed him to release all of it. She told him that the king and queen were like parents to their subjects, and parents must feed their children even at the cost of their own hunger. Therefore, no food was to be reserved for the royal household alone. Historians record that during this period of famine, the king and queen themselves observed fasts for many days.

History further narrates that when the great Emperor **Dharmaraj Yudhisthira** of Hastinapur learned of the famine in Agroha, he instructed his brother **Bhimsen** to take **one thousand carts filled with grain** to the kingdom of Agroha as a gesture of goodwill and friendship. The mighty Bhimsen was welcomed with great honour in Agroha by Samrat Agrasen, who addressed him affectionately as uncle.

With the blessings of Lord Shiva, Samrat Agrasen later travelled throughout **Bharat**. During these journeys, at one place in the forest, he saw tiger cubs and wolf cubs playing together in harmony. Samrat Agrasen and Queen Madhavi regarded this as a deeply auspicious sign of peace and returned joyfully to their kingdom of Agroha.

In due course, Agroha became one of the most prosperous and powerful kingdoms of the age. The influence of Samrat Agrasen spread into the neighbouring regions as well. Trade, agriculture, and industry flourished, and the fame of King Agrasen spread far and wide.

## Family Life and Eighteen Yagnas

Samrat Agrasen lived in the capital city of his kingdom, **Agranagar**, together with his righteous and deeply religious queen, Madhavi. History records that Queen Madhavi actively participated in royal duties on every important occasion and stood beside the Samrat in the administration of the kingdom.

On the advice of his Spiritual Master, Maharishi Garg, Maharaja Agrasen once again undertook the worship of **Lord Shiva** in order to obtain a boon that would ensure unending prosperity for his kingdom. Pleased with his devotion, Lord Shiva appeared and instructed him to worship **Goddess Mahalakshmi**, for through her grace everlasting prosperity would descend upon his realm. Maharaja Agrasen followed this divine instruction and again meditated upon and worshipped Goddess Mahalakshmi.

The Scriptures state that Goddess Mahalakshmi, pleased with his devotion, appeared before him and granted him a boon that there would never be any scarcity of **food, wealth, or prosperity** in his kingdom or among his subjects.

Samrat Agrasen performed many **Yagnas** for the welfare and prosperity of his kingdom and his people. It is said that he conducted **eighteen Yagnas**, and in those days the performance of Yagna was regarded as a great symbol of prosperity and sacred kingship.

However, during the **eighteenth Yagna**, when Samrat Agrasen saw a horse struggling as it was being led toward the sacrificial altar, his heart was filled with pity. He felt deep anguish at the idea of sacrificing an innocent creature in the name of ritual prosperity.

Reflecting deeply, he concluded that there could be no true prosperity in a system that required the slaughter of innocent and

mute animals. At that moment, the principle of **Ahimsa**, non-violence, took firm root in his heart. Samrat Agrasen shared his thoughts with his ministers. They raised an important concern, saying that Yagna was widely seen as a sign of royal power and prosperity, and that neighbouring kings might interpret his abandonment of animal sacrifice as a sign of weakness and thus attack his kingdom. Yet Samrat Agrasen stood firm. He convinced them and declared that no prosperity built upon cruelty could be righteous. He proclaimed that from that day onward, no act of violence against animals would be tolerated in his kingdom, and no animal sacrifice would be allowed.

Samrat Agrasen said:

पशुश्चेन्निहतारू स्वर्गं ज्योतिष्टोमे गमिष्यति ।  
स्वपिता यजमानेन तत्र कथं न हिंस्यते ॥  
(सर्व दर्शन संग्रह - चार्वाक दर्शन)

**Pashushchennihataru swargam jyotishtome gamishyati.**  
**Swapita yajmaanen tatra katham na hinsyate.**  
**(Charvaak Darshan)**

If by killing an animal in sacrifice that animal goes to heaven, then by the same logic, why should one not kill one's own parents and send them there as well?

According to **Bharatendu Harishchandra**, the **seventeen Yagnas** performed earlier by Samrat Agrasen, each under the guidance of a Maharishi, gave rise to **seventeen Gotras**. The **eighteenth Yagna**, which was completed without animal sacrifice, was considered only half-complete in the old ritual sense, and therefore gave rise to a **half Gotra**.

The following is the list of the **eighteen Gotras** and the Maharishis associated with each Yagna:

1. Garg – Maharishi Garg Acharya
2. Goyal – Maharishi Gobhil
3. Bansal – Maharishi Vatsa
4. Kansal – Maharishi Kaushik
5. Singhal – Maharishi Shandilya
6. Mangal – Maharishi Mangal
7. Jindal – Maharishi Jaimini
8. Tingal – Maharishi Tandavya
9. Eran – Maharishi Orvya
10. Dharan – Maharishi Dhomya
11. Tayal – Maharishi Mudgal
12. Bindal – Maharishi Vashishtha
13. Mittal – Maharishi Maitreya
14. Kutchal – Maharishi Kashyap
15. Bhandal – Maharishi Katyayan
16. Nangal – Maharishi Nagendra
17. Madhukul – Maharishi Shakalya
18. Goyan – Maharishi Gautam

Samrat Agrasen ruled Agroha for **108 years**. After that, with the blessings of his Spiritual Master **Maharishi Garg Acharya**, he accepted **Sanyas**. The Scriptures declare that Maharishi Garg granted him the boon of **immortality**. Therefore, he is believed even today to remain alive in **Kailash Parvat**, in the presence of **Lord Shiva** and his Spiritual Master Maharishi Garg.

Whenever he is invoked with devotion during worship, he is said to appear in subtle form and bless his devotees.

**एवं राजा सम्प्रनीतो मिथ्या व्याशींकातात्मना ।  
चकार शान्तिम परमात्म नरधर्म जन्मेजयात ॥**

**Evam raja samprneeto mithyaa vyashinkatatmanaa.  
Chakaar shantim paramaam nradharmam janmejyaat.**

Whenever there is unrest, confusion, or grief in life, if one prays to Samrat Agrasen and listens to his sacred life-story, one attains peace.

## Teachings/ Achievements

Maharishi Ramgopal Bedil Ji, the founder of **Agravishwa Trust, Amgaon**, has described the teachings and achievements of Samrat Agrasen as follows.

### **Basis of Universal Peace and a Blissful Life**

Samrat Agrasen taught us the true aim of human life. He emphasized that human birth is attained only after passing through millions of births and deaths in different **Yonis**. Once one is blessed with human life, the highest goal is to attain perfection, realize **Satchidananda**—the supreme divine bliss—and become one with God. In every phase of his life, Samrat Agrasen presented the right path of physical, mental, moral, and spiritual conduct through which one may attain both worldly well-being and celestial happiness.

Maharishi Jaimini said:

एतदाश्चर्यमाख्यानमं माया प्रोक्तमं सुखावहं ।  
मानवमं धर्ममास्थाय कथा पुण्या प्रबोधिता ॥

**Ētadāścaryamākhyānam mayā prōktam sukāvaham.  
Mānavam dharmamāsthāya kathā puṇyā prabōdhitā.**

Whenever there is dejection or confusion in life, the narration of the sacred life-stories of Samrat Agrasen gives courage, interest in life, and the inspiration to become dutiful toward society and community, just as it once did for Emperor Janamejaya. His wondrous life-stories are filled with happiness and are among the most sacred and uplifting narratives of humanity.

## Founder of Equality

The concept of **equality** was taught to us by Samrat Agrasen. He gave to the whole world the message of equality and humanity, as expressed in the following Shlok.

**आत्र्प्यन्स्यमं परो धर्म याच्यते यत् प्रदीयते ।**

**Āṅśyansyaṁ parō dharmā: Yācyatē yat pradīyatē.**

Samrat Agrasen taught us to be kind and charitable to all, especially to the poor and distressed. He emphasized that a charitable person is dearly loved by God.

**कृषाय कृतविद्याय वृत्तिकीनाय सुव्रत ।  
क्रिया नियमिता कार्या पुत्रैर्दरिश्वा सीदते ॥  
आयाचमाना सर्वज्ञा सर्वपायै प्रयत्नत ।  
ते रक्षणीया विद्वान्स सर्वकामसुखावहै ॥**

**Kṛśāya kṛtavidyāya vṛttikīṇāya Suvrata.  
Kriyā niyamitā: Kāryā: Putrairdāraiśca sīdatē.  
Ayācamānā: Sarvajñā: Sarvōpāyai: Prayatnata.  
Tē rakṣaṇīyā vīdvānsa: Sarvakāmasukhāvahai.**

Samrat Agrasen taught that the wealthy and well-settled members of society must look after those who are intelligent and worthy, yet who, because of bad fortune or lack of opportunity, are unable to earn enough to support their families. Such persons may not ask for help because of their self-respect, yet it remains the sacred duty of society to support them.

To establish this principle in practice, Samrat Agrasen instructed his sons to help all such needy persons without any discrimination based on caste, race, status, or birth.

अपरेशामं परेशामं च परेभ्यश्चापि ये परे ।  
कष्टेशं जीवितेनार्थस्त्वामं विना बन्धुराश्राय ॥

Aparēṣāṃ parēṣāṃ ca parēbhyaścāpi yē pare.  
Kastēṣāṃ jīvitēnārthastvām vinā bandhurāśraya.

Samrat Agrasen further said that such help should always be given in a manner that does not humiliate the receiver. The needy should feel not as objects of pity, but as members of one's own greater family, and the act of helping should be regarded as a natural duty toward society.

सर्वोत्थानाय सश्रद्धमम् भ्रात्रभावेन चावह ।  
योगमं क्सेमन्चा मन्वानं ग्रहीयुस्तेभिमानत ॥  
देयानि वृत्तिक्शीनाय पौरैरेकैकाश क्रमात् ।  
गत्वा निस्कृष्टिकामं दद्यु जनः कुर्यान्नयाचानां ॥

Sarvōt'thānāya saśrad'dham bhrātrbhāvēna cāvaha.  
Yōgam kṣēmañca manvāna: Grhṇīyustēbhimānata.  
Dēyāni vṛttikṣhīnāya paurairēkaikaśa: Kramāt.  
Gatvā niṣkṣhṭikām dadyu: Janaḥ kuryānnayācanām.

Samrat Agrasen declared, "O child, in this city of Agroha, any person deprived of livelihood should be helped without any distinction of caste, race, or social standing. Every newcomer and migrant family to this kingdom should be given one gold coin and one brick by each citizen, so that they may begin their livelihood and build their home."

एष ते वित्तमम वत्स सर्वभुतकुतुंबकं ।  
विसिस्त सर्वयज्ञानामं नित्यमत्र प्रवर्ततां ॥

Ēṣa tē vitataṃ vatsa sarvabhūtakuṭumbakam.  
Viśiṣṭa: Sarvayajñānām nityamatra pravartatām.

Samrat Agrasen said, “O child, by developing equality and the feeling that society is one family, true humanity arises. This is greater than the merit of hundreds of Yagnas. You are all my sons, and you must keep this great campaign—this **Karma Yagna**—alive and expanding throughout your lives.”

Through this teaching of Samrat Agrasen, the ideal of “**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**” gradually takes form—that the whole universe is indeed one family.

### **Coordinator of Different Cultures**

It can be seen from history that the cultures of the **Vaishnavites (Aryan)** and **Shaivaites (Naga)** were often in conflict. In the past, Sanatan Dharma had repeatedly suffered because of communal tension and fierce opposition between these two streams of tradition.

Nagaraja Mahidhar, the father-in-law of Samrat Agrasen, also had strong reservations toward the Vaishnavites. Scripture describes that his views were in conflict with the principles of Vaishnavism.

**यथा पुस्करपत्रसु पतितास्तोयबिन्दव ।  
तथा न स्लेसमिच्चन्ति जजातय स्वेषु सौहृदं ॥**

**Yathā puṣkarapatrēṣu patitāstōyabindava.  
Tathā na ślēśamicchanti jñātaya: Svēṣu sauhṛdam.**

Just as drops of water do not cling to a lotus leaf, so too, he said, one should not cling to them, nor cultivate friendship with them.

As Nagaraja Mahidhar was a Shaivite and opposed to Vaishnava principles, so too many Vaishnavites held similar opposition toward Shaiva traditions.

Nagaraja further argued that even the divine carriers of the two deities were enemies of one another—the serpents of Shiva and the eagle of Vishnu. Therefore, he questioned how friendship could arise between the two traditions.

हस्यन्ति वयसनेस्वेते ज्ञातिनामं जजातय सदा ।  
नागकन्यामं प्रार्थयानस्त्वमं नाप्यामकृतात्मभिः ॥

**Hṛṣyanti vyaśanēṣvētē jñātīnām jñātayaḥ Sadā.  
Nāgakan'yām prārthayānastvaṁ nāpyāmakṛtātmabhiḥ.**

Nagaraja Mahidhar's inner hostility toward the Aryans was so deep that he had never intended to marry his daughter, Princess Madhavi, to any Vaishnav prince. He preferred instead to offer her in marriage to **Devraj Indra**. Yet, on the advice of Maharishi Gargacharya, he changed his mind and agreed to organize a **Swayamvar** for his daughter. As we know, Princess Madhavi chose Samrat Agrasen, a Vaishnav youth, as her husband.

The inner and outer beauty of Samrat Agrasen had a profound and transforming effect upon both Nagaraja Mahidhar and the young princess.

Maharishi Jaimini describes:

युवा मतिमतमं श्रेष्ठो जजानविज्ञानकोविदा ।  
सर्वानेव निजग्राह चकार निरुत्तरं ॥

**Yuvā matimatām śreṣṭhō jñānavijñānakōvida.  
Sarvānēva nijagrāha cakāra niruttaram.**

Maharishi Jaimini said that Samrat Agrasen, though still young, was intellectually and spiritually superior to all the other kings present in the Swayamvar.

After the marriage of Samrat Agrasen and Princess Madhavi, these two different cultural streams were united. This sacred marriage dissolved the hostility between the **Vaishnavas** and the **Shaivas**.

वर्गवुभौ नागनराधिपानामं व्दारेपिधाने ह्युभयप्रदेषात् ।  
षमेयतुर्द्वावपि भिन्नवेषौ भन्नैकसेतु पयसामिवोघौ ॥  
वैवाहिके कौतुक संविधाने वर्गवुभौ नागनराधिपानाय् ।  
एकिर्कृतौ सानुमतोनुरागादस्तान्तरावेक कुलोपमेयं ॥

Vargāvubhau nāganarādhīpānām vdarēpidhānē  
hyubhayapradēśāt.  
Samīyaturvdāvapi bhinnavēṣau bhannaikasētū  
payasāmivōghau.  
Vaivāhikē kautuka sanvidhānē vargāvubhau  
nāganarādhīpānāy.  
Ēkīkṛtau sānumatōnurāgādastāntarāvēka kulōpamēyam.

Though the two sides had long remained distant, suspicious, and outwardly different in appearance and custom, like far-separated streams, yet through this marriage they were united by mutual consent and affection and became one family.

King Nagaraja Mahidhar then presented **the seven Talas** as dowry to Samrat Agrasen. These were **Tal, Atal, Vital, Satal, Taltal, Rasatal, and Patal**.

While making this offering, he declared in the presence of all Naga warriors:

अग्रस्य नाम्ना भाषेरान इममं लोकम तलोत्तमं ।

Agrasya nāmnā bhāṣēran imam lōkam talōttamam.

From this day onward, these districts of the Naga kingdom shall belong to Samrat Agrasen.

षुसन्स्क्रतेभ्य सर्वेभ्य रमणीयो भविष्यति ।  
ईदमग्रतलमम् नाम्ना त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुतं ॥

**Pusanskṛtēbhya: Sarvēbhya: Ramaṇīyō bhaviṣyati.**  
**Idamagratalam nāmnā triṣu lōkēṣu viśrutam.**

The union of these two races—Shaivyas and Vaishnavas—shall henceforth be our common ideal. To commemorate this great union, our capital shall be called **Agratala**, representing the harmony of all three realms—**Devlok**, **Naglok**, and **Manavlok**.

सर्वरत्नाकरवती सर्वकामफलद्रुमा ।  
सर्वाश्रमाधिवासा सग्रतलाख्य गुनैर्युता ॥

**Sarvaratnākaravatī sarvakāmaphaladrumā.**  
**Sarvāśramādhivāsā sāgratalākhyā guṇairyutā.**

This city shall be as precious as a treasury of jewels. The **Kalpavriksha-like** trees planted here shall fulfill the wishes of those who take refuge beneath them. People of all faiths and all **Ashrams** may reside here freely. This city shall stand as a shining example of peace and contentment.

### **A Proponent of Women's Dignity**

At the Swayamvar, Princess Madhavi, daughter of King Nagaraja Mahidhar, chose Samrat Agrasen as her husband. After the marriage, as was the custom in some royal traditions of that age, King Nagaraja Mahidhar brought forward his other daughters and requested Samrat Agrasen to accept them also as his wives.

In response to this request, Samrat Agrasen humbly replied:

कथमं नु वा मनस्विन्या माधव्या पानिपङ्कजं ।  
ग्रहित्वा नागदुहितु लोकेधर्ममं चराम्यहम् ॥

**Katham nu vā manasvin'yā: Mādhavyā: Pāṇipaṅkajam.  
Grhītvā nāgaduhitu: Lōkēdharmam carāmyaham.**

“O revered Samrat Nagraj, my Guru has taught me self-control, discipline of mind, and the righteous conduct prescribed by **Lokacharya**—the moral codes of society. I have now accepted your daughter Princess Madhavi as my wife, and after this I cannot marry anyone else.”

अनियोज्ये नियोगे मामं न निभुङ्क्ष्व महामते ।  
भगिन्यो धर्मतो या मे तत्स्पर्शमम् तवमं कथमं वदे ॥

**Aniyōjyē niyōgē mām na  
nibhuṅkṣva mahāmatē.  
Bhagin'yō dharmatō yā mē  
tatsparśam tvaṁ katham vadē.**

“O noble and learned king, you are asking me to perform an act that is not in accordance with Dharma. The sisters of my wife are, according to Sanatan Dharma, to be regarded by me as my own sisters. Therefore, please do not ask me to accept your other daughters as my wives.”

He further and very respectfully addressed Nagendra Mahidhar:

अधर्मात् पाहि नागेषा मामं धर्ममं प्रतिपादया ।

**Adharmāt pāhi nāgēśa mām dharmam pratipādaya.**

“O pious and noble Nagendra, please help me to remain protected from any unrighteous act. I desire only to conduct myself according to the sacred norms of Dharma.”

Even after hearing such elevated and righteous thoughts from Samrat Agrasen, Nagendra once again attempted to persuade him to marry his other daughters.

**नर्पस्य बहव्यो विहिता महिश्यो लोकसं माता ।  
श्रूयन्ते बहव पुनस एकस्या पतयोपि च ॥**

**Nṛpasya bahavyō vihitā mahiṣyō lōkasam'matā.  
Śrūyantē bahava: Punsā: Ēkasyā: Patayōpi ca.**

King Nagaraj said, “O Rajan, you know well that the kings of the Vaishnavas, that is, the Aryan race, often have many wives. It is the accepted custom among Vaishnava rulers to have multiple queens. I have also heard that among the Aryans there have been women with more than one husband as well, as in the case of Draupadi, who had the five Pandavas as her husbands. Is this not so?”

He continued, “O Samrat Agrasen, I grant you permission to have many wives. Therefore, you need not worry at all. You may marry my other daughters one by one. There is no sin in this. It is a proper and virtuous act.”

But Samrat Agrasen, with folded hands, upheld once more his firm resolve regarding the dignity of women.

**अधर्मोयमं मतो मेद्य विरुद्धो लोकगर्हित ।  
ततोहमं न करोम्येवमं व्यवसायमं कृत्यामं प्रति ॥**

**Adharmōyaṁ matō mēdya virud'dhō lōkagar'hita.  
Tatōhaṁ na karōmyevaṁ vyavasāyaṁ kriyāṁ prati.**

Samrat Agrasen said, “O Nagaraj, in my view, what you are asking me to do is unjust. It is contrary to Dharma. It is neither wise nor righteous, and therefore I cannot do it.”

आत्मनो य श्रुतो धर्म स धर्मो रक्षति प्रजा ।  
शरीरमं च धनमम् स्वर्गमृशिन् पित्रन ॥

Ātmanō ya: Śrutō dharmā: Sa dharmō rakṣati prajā.  
Śarīrām lōkayātrām ca dhanam svargamṛṣin pitrn.

“O Nagraj, the Shruti describes the wife as the better half of her husband. The righteous conduct of a wife protects Dharma, the subjects, worldly life, wealth, heaven, and even the ancestors.”

कृतदारोस्मि नागेन्द्र भार्येयमं दयिता मम ।  
पुरुशानामं च नारिनामं सुदु खा ससपत्नता ॥

Kṛtadārōsmi nāgēndra bhāryēyam dāyitā mama.  
Puruṣānām ca nārīnām sudu:Khā sasapatnatā.

“O Nagendra, I am already married, and Princess Madhavi is my beloved wife. The thought of co-wives is painful to any woman, and such an arrangement would be an injustice to her.”

Thus Samrat Agrasen declared, in the clearest possible terms, his firm stand for the dignity of women.

न चान्यासामं पतिरहमम् सत्यमेतत् वचो मम ।

Na cān'yāsām patiraham satyamētat vacō mama.

Samrat Agrasen said, “I cannot marry anyone else, for Princess Madhavi is my wife. This is my final and unwavering decision.”

Maharishi Jaimini told Maharaja Janamejaya that the marriage of Princess Madhavi and Samrat Agrasen was not merely the union of two individuals, but the union of two races—**Naga and Arya**. It also established a great moral principle: that a woman is not

merely an object for the enjoyment of lust, but a true companion in life, to be accepted in a sacred bond of mutual respect, support, and spiritual purpose. This, he said, was a most unique act, unheard of in those times.

During that era, the practice of polygamy was prevalent among royal families. By his conduct, Samrat Agrasen set a noble example against polygamy and made a profound contribution toward upholding the dignity of women.

### **Persuader of Non-Violence**

The **Shruti** declares that the foundation of a righteous life rests upon **non-violence**. A king cannot truly safeguard the welfare of his subjects unless he promotes Ahimsa, and Samrat Agrasen established this principle through his own life.

Samrat Agrasen was a deeply compassionate ruler whose love extended not only to human beings but also to animals. There is a well-known incident that beautifully illustrates his tenderness toward living creatures.

As narrated earlier, on the advice of Maharishi Gargacharya, Samrat Agrasen went to **Naglok** in eastern India to participate in the Swayamvar of Princess Madhavi, daughter of King Nagaraj Mahidhar. After his marriage to Princess Madhavi, Samrat Agrasen visited the Ashram of **Maharishi Uddaloka** in Manipur. There, in the temple of **Hatkeshwaram**, he worshipped Lord Shiva. After completing the worship, feeling weary, he lay down to rest in the garden under the shade of a tree.

When he awoke, he saw some **Nag kanyas** entering a lake for bathing. At the same time, a herd of cows along with their calves came there to drink water. Suddenly, a fierce tiger appeared near the lake, roaring terribly. The roar of the tiger caused the cows and calves to tremble in fear.

स द्रष्ट्वा चिन्तयित्वाग्र सद्य सत्यपराक्रम ।  
श्रेष्ठो धनुष्मतामं वीरो दयाभावसमिरित ॥

**Sa dr̥ṣṭvā cintayitvāgra: Sadya: Satyaparākrama.  
Śrēṣṭhō dhanuṣmatām vīrō dayābhāvasamīrita.**

Seeing this, he immediately revealed his true valour; the foremost among archers, the hero, yet one moved by compassion.

Witnessing the danger, Samrat Agrasen at once felt the duty to protect both the herd of cows and the Nag kanyas. Though he was a mighty and valiant warrior, his heart was filled with compassion. Therefore, he resolved to protect them in such a manner that even the tiger would not be harmed.

ररक्ष विधिना गाश्च बानैर्व्याघ्रमतादय ।  
शरसन्निचायस्थोयमं तमं गाव पर्यवारयन ॥

**Rarakṣa vidhinā gāśca bāṇairvyāghramatādayat.  
Śarasannicayasthōyamam tamam gāva: Paryavārayan.**

He released his arrows not to kill the tiger, but to drive and surround it in such a way that it could no longer threaten the cows. Thus he saved the herd and protected the Nag kanyas. The tiger was restrained and driven safely back into the forest.

This incident stands as one of the finest examples of Samrat Agrasen's love for animals and his commitment to their protection. By refraining from killing the tiger, he also displayed his compassion even toward a wild and dangerous creature.

During his reign, the sacrifice of animals in Yagnas was widely practiced throughout Aryavarta as a means of obtaining spiritual power or heavenly merit. As described earlier, Samrat Agrasen prohibited this practice of animal sacrifice in Yagnas within his

kingdom. This too was a great act through which he promoted the ideal of non-violence.

His decision to ban animal sacrifice in Yagnas was not readily accepted even by some Rishis of that time.

**यज्ञार्थं पशव स्रष्टा स्वयमेव स्वयम्भुवा ।  
यज्ञश्चा भूत्यै सर्वस्य तस्माद्यज्ञे वधोवध ॥**

**Yajñārthaṁ paśava: Sṛṣṭā: Svayamēva svayambhuvā.  
Yajñaśca bhūtyai sarvasya tasmādyajñe vadhōvadhā.**

Some Rishis responded to his ban and said, “O Rajan, though what you say has truth in it, yet even Brahma has declared that for the desired fruit of a Yagna, animals are to be sacrificed. Since this is sanctioned by Scripture, such sacrifice should not be regarded as violence.”

Samrat Agrasen, however, replied with a heart full of compassion, giving a reference from the Shruti.

**वृक्षान्श्चित्वा पशुन हत्वा क्रत्वा रुधिरकर्दमम् ।  
यद्येवमं गम्यते स्वर्गे नरके केन गम्यते ॥**

**Vṛkṣānśchitvā paśūn hatvā kṛtvā rudhirakardamam.  
Yadyēvaṁ gamyatē svargē narakē kēna gamyatē.**

Samrat Agrasen replied, “Cutting down trees, killing animals, and causing blood to flow from innocent beings who have done no wrong to you—this is the road not to heaven but to hell.”

He then said, “O revered Rishis, therefore in my understanding, the killing of animals is unquestionably an act of violence and contrary to religion. No matter how learned a person may be, if he performs such an un-Aryan deed, he is bound to go to hell.”

Samrat Agrasen further declared, “O Maharshis, these living beings, who ought to be protected, are instead sacrificed in Yagnas merely to fulfill the selfish desires of human beings. This can never be justified. The killing of animals is a sin. How can one hope to attain heaven through such sinful cruelty? After death, one will surely have to account for such deeds and may indeed descend into hell.”

Samrat Agrasen further said, “O Maharshi, I am firmly opposed to the killing of such animals merely for the fulfilment of our selfish desires. These sacrificial animals have done nothing against us. As Kshatriyas, it is our duty to protect the weak and the helpless, not to destroy them.”

**स्वषरिर्मपि परार्थे य खलु दद्यादयाचित क्रपया ।  
स्वसुखस्य क्रते च कथमं प्रानिवधक्रौर्यमनुमन्ये ॥**

**Svaśarīramapī parārthē ya:  
Khalu dadyādayācīta: Kṛpayā.  
Svasukhasya kṛtē ca katham  
prāñivadhakrauryamanuman'yē.**

Samrat Agrasen said, “O great Rishis, every soul is a manifestation of God. If any true benevolence can be achieved, I am prepared even to sacrifice my own body. How then can I ever permit the killing of innocent souls, even if they be animals?”

Then the Rishis replied, “O Samrat Agrasen, for Kshatriyas there is no sin in sacrificing animals in Yagna if such sacrifice brings welfare to the kingdom. If you do not complete the Yagna with all its prescribed rites, including animal sacrifice, it will be considered incomplete, and such incompleteness may bring disastrous consequences to you and to future generations.”

Samrat Agrasen replied, “O Maharishis, in my understanding, non-violence is itself the truth of religion. I shall never allow the killing of innocent animals in sacrifice. Such an act is sinful.”

**सत्यप्रतिश्रवा सोहमं वैश्यधर्ममम् नु पालये ।  
प्रजानामात्र्षन्स्यार्थमं वैश्यमं राज्यमं व्रतोत्तमं ॥**

**Satyapratishravā: Sōham vaiśyadharmam nu pālayē.  
Prajānāmāṅṛṣṅsyaṛtham vaiśyam rājyam vratōttamam.**

Samrat Agrasen continued, “With full truthfulness I make this solemn vow: henceforth I shall always follow Sanatan Dharma and the Vaishnava traditions of the Arya race. I shall govern my subjects according to the sacred principles laid down in the Scriptures. I shall protect and nurture my subjects, including animals, and bring prosperity to my kingdom. I shall remain compassionate and sympathetic toward all living beings, and I shall instruct my subjects to live in the same spirit.”

Thus Samrat Agrasen embraced and established the principle of non-violence for the welfare of his subjects.

**अहिन्सा सर्वभुतानामं नित्यमस्मासु रोचते ।  
प्रत्यक्षत साधयामो न परोक्षमुपास्महे ॥**

**Ahinsā sarvabhūtānām nityamasmāsu rōcatē.  
Pratyakṣata: Sādhayāmō na parōkṣamupāsmahē.**

Samrat Agrasen said, “O my subjects, never walk the path of violence in your lives. Neither by mind nor by speech should you wound anyone. Do not merely speak of non-violence; bring it into daily practice and cultivate it within your very personality. Only then will you truly enjoy peace and develop wholehearted sensitivity toward all beings created by Nature in this universe.”

## **An Exponent of Monotheism – One God**

Samrat Agrasen also taught the principle of monotheism: that there is only one God, though He may be worshipped in many forms.

Samrat Agrasen explained this divine principle to his father-in-law, King Nagaraja Mahidhar.

He said, “O Nagendra, true knowledge (Gyan) and devotion (Bhakti) are not different in essence. Remember well that knowledge without devotion bears no fruit. For example, your chosen deity Lord Shiva is the very symbol and source of knowledge, and yet He Himself remains ever devoted to Lord Vishnu in Bhakti. Thus, O Nagendra, Lord Shiva transcends Maya through devotion. Lord Shiva is united with Prakruti, which itself is the manifestation of Lord Vishnu. Therefore, there is in truth no difference between Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. They are one and the same.”

**यथैकेव सूर्योयमं ज्योतिर्नानार्चयते जनैः ।  
जलादि च विशेषेण दर्शयते तत्तथैव तौ ॥**

**Yathaikaēva sūryōyam jyōtirnānārcyatē janaiḥ.  
Jalādi ca viśēṣeṇa dr̥ṣyatē tattathaiva tau.**

“O Nagendra, there is only one Sun, yet when reflected in disturbed waters, it appears as though there are many suns. In the same way, the Supreme Father may appear in many forms, but He is one and only one.”

He further illustrated this truth by referring to the word **Urdhavareta**, which has several meanings. One meaning refers to a sage or ascetic; another points to one who looks upward. Whether as a sage or as one gazing upward in daylight, both behold the Sun. Likewise, the person sitting on the shore of the sea sees

the Sun reflected in every wave. In the same way, a restless mind sees God in many forms; but when, through penance, the mind becomes calm, peaceful, and free of waves of thought, then only one Sun, one God, is seen.

Thus, through his philosophy, Samrat Agrasen brought both the Shaivites and Vaishnavites into a spirit of harmony and friendship.

Duties of Husband and Wife, King and Subject

**यथा पत्याश्रयो धर्म स्तिनामं लोके सनातन ।  
सदैव सा गतिर्नान्या तथस्माकमम् प्रजाश्राय ॥**

**Yathā patyāśrayō dharmā: Strīṇām lōkē sanātana.  
Sadaiva sā gatirnān'yā tathāsmākaṁ prajāśraya.**

With the support of the husband, the Dharma of a woman is fulfilled in accordance with Sanatan principles. She should remain steadfast in that path and not deviate from it.

Samrat Agrasen gave to his sons the teaching regarding the duties of husband and wife, and also of king and subject. He advised that the natural duty of the wife is to serve her husband, but at the same time the husband must protect his wife and provide the necessities of life so that she may joyfully fulfil her sacred responsibilities. In the same manner, he spoke of the relationship between king and subject. Both complement each other. The king must look after all the needs of his subjects, and the subjects in turn must obey the law and render service to the State. The king should always govern his subjects with kindness and compassion.

## **Beneficial Effects of Remembering Saint Agrasen**

Samrat Agrasen, the great benevolent king, was, as stated earlier, the founder of the new Vaishya community known as the **Agrawal Samaj**. The remembrance of his name, the chanting of his glory, and the reading and hearing of his life-stories are said to bring great benefits, both spiritual and material.

### **Maharishi Jaimini – First Narrator**

Maharishi Jaimini, the principal disciple of Bhagwan Ved Vyas Ji Maharaj, described the life-stories of Samrat Agrasen in his sacred Granth, **Jaygranth**. These life-stories were first narrated by Maharishi Jaimini to the great Emperor Janmejaya when the emperor had lost his peace of mind after the death of his father, the noble Emperor Parikshit, who died from the snakebite of King Takshak. The stories of Samrat Agrasen restored peace to his disturbed mind and filled his life once again with joy and purpose.

When Emperor Janmejaya requested Maharishi Jaimini to teach him how to rule his kingdom in a righteous and religious manner, Maharishi Jaimini gave him the example of Samrat Agrasen's rule. After listening to and understanding the life-stories of Samrat Agrasen, the mind of Emperor Janmejaya became calm, contemplative, and purified. Thereafter he ruled his kingdom with balance and righteousness, and in the end attained salvation.

Maharishi Jaimini further said that by reading and hearing the life-stories of Samrat Agrasen, one obtains the grace of Mother Mahalakshmi.

**महालक्ष्मिवर इव ग्रन्थो मान्येतिहासक ।  
तमं कश्चित् पुण्ययोगेन प्राप्नोति पुरुषोत्तम ॥**

**Mahālakṣmīvara iva granthō mān'yētihāsaka.  
Taṁ kaścit puṇyayōgēna prāpnōti puruṣōttama.**

As declared in the Scriptures, by revering Mahalakshmi one attains a pious life, O Purushottama.

Maharishi Jaimini said that by the grace of Shri Mahalakshmi, and by listening to the life-stories of Samrat Agrasen, the great Emperor Janmejaya became a successful and exalted king. These sacred life-stories are the very jewel among all benevolent narratives. Only those who are blessed by good deeds in this or in previous births gain the fortune of reading or hearing them, and through that fortune attain peace and finally salvation.

**आग्राख्यानमम् भवेद्यत्र तत्र श्री स्वसु स्थिरा ।  
ऋत्वाभिषेकमेतस्य तत पापै प्रमुच्यते ॥**

**Agrākhyānaṁ bhavēdyatra tatra śrī: Savasu: Sthirā.  
Ṛtvābhiṣēkamētasya tata: Pāpai: Pramucyatē.**

The one who worships Mahalakshmi, seating Her reverentially and performing Abhishekam, becomes freed from sin.

The Maharishi said that wherever the life-stories of Samrat Agrasen are preserved in sacred book form, and wherever they are regularly read and heard with devotion, Goddess Mahalakshmi remains pleased with that family. The family that worships the Goddess with Abhishek while reading and listening to the life-stories of Samrat Agrasen becomes freed from the troubles and obstacles of life.

**ग्रन्थदर्षण योगोयमं सर्वलक्ष्मीफलप्रद ।  
दुःखानि चास्य नश्यन्ति सौख्यमं सर्वत्र विन्दति ॥**

**Granthadarśana yōgōyam sarvalakṣmīphalaprada.  
Du Khāni cāsyā naśyanti saukhyaṁ sarvatra vindati.**

The sacred granths declare that this prayer bestows every form of prosperity. The sorrows of the devotee are destroyed, and happiness is found everywhere in life.

Maharishi further explained that only those who are blessed by virtuous deeds performed in this or in previous births gain the fortune of reading and listening to these life stories of Samrat Agrasen. Such fortunate souls receive the grace of Goddess Mahalakshmi, who grants them success in performing their duties according to Dharma.

**दर्शनेनालमस्यात्र ह्यभिषेकेन किमं पुना ।  
विलयमं यान्ति पापानि हिमवद् भास्करोदये ॥**

**Darśanēnālamasyātra hyabhiṣēkēṇa kiṁ puna.  
Vilayaṁ yānti pāpāni himavad bhāskarōdayē.**

By the mere sight of a sacred place, much purification is attained; what more can be said of performing Abhishekam there? Just as snow melts away at the rising of the Sun, so too do sins dissolve.

The Maharishi further stated that all sins committed by a person are destroyed even by the simple vision of the book containing the life stories of Samrat Agrasen, just as ice melts when touched by the rays of the Sun. If one performs **Jal Abhishek**, the ceremonial bathing of Goddess Mahalakshmi with holy water, the effect becomes even more powerful and beneficial.

**प्रशस्याङ्गोपानायुक्त कल्पवृक्षस्वरूपिने ।  
महासिद्धियुत श्रीमद्गोपाख्यान ते नाम ॥**

**Praśasyāṅgōpāṅgayukta: Kalpavṛkṣasvarūpiṇē.  
Mahāsidhdiyuta śrīmadgrōpākhyāna tē nama.**

These sacred narratives are comparable to the divine **Kalpavriksha**, the wish-fulfilling celestial tree. Remembering this holy name is glorious and grants great spiritual powers and blessings.

Therefore, one should read and listen to the life stories and noble achievements of Samrat Agrasen. These narratives encompass all the significant events of his life and are like the Kalpavriksha that grants every noble aspiration. They bestow the eight mystical **Siddhis** upon those who approach them with devotion. With deep reverence and dedication, we bow again and again to the sacred life stories of Samrat Agrasen.

**The Grace of Samrat Agrasen on Emperor Janamejaya**

Maharaja Janamejaya said:

जन्मेजय उवाच ।  
एषा धन्यो हि धन्यानामं धन्यक्रुद धन्यपुनाव ।  
नरेसु तु सनागेषु नास्ति धन्यतरोग्रत ॥

Janamējaya uvāca |  
Ēṣā dhan'yō hi dhan'yānām dhan'yakṛd dhan'yapuṅgava.  
Narēṣu tu sanāgēṣu nāsti dhan'yatarōgrata.

After listening to the life stories of Samrat Agrasen narrated by Maharishi Jaimini, the learned Emperor Janamejaya said, “O great Sage, Samrat Agrasen was indeed a blessed soul among the blessed. Having heard the account of his life and the noble manner in which he governed his kingdom—pure, righteous, and beneficial to his subjects—I conclude that among all the kings of

the human race there was none more blessed and noble than Samrat Agrasen.”

हृदि मे जायते सौख्यं परमं च तवाननात् ।  
श्र्वानस्याग्रसेनस्य पिबतस्चा कथाम्रतं ॥

Hṛdi mē jāyatē saukhyaṁ paramaṁ ca tavānanāt.  
Śṛvānasyāgrasēnasya pibataśca kathāmṛtam.

“O Maharshi Jaimini, after hearing the sacred life stories of the great and benevolent king Samrat Agrasen, I experience immense happiness. My heart is now filled with supreme bliss.”

एक एव क्षीरनिधिः सन्तापहोच्यते ।  
किं पुनश्चारन्द्रकिरनैर्मलयानिलसन्युतैः ॥  
सुशीलत्वमं स गमित सुमनोभिरलङ्कृत ।  
चारितमं ह्यग्रसेनस्य श्रुत्वाहमम् ते मुने कृति ॥

Ēka ēva kṣīranidhiriha santāpahōcyatē.  
Kiṁ punaścarandrakiraṇairmalayānilasanyutai.  
Suśīlatvaṁ sa gamita: Sumanōbhiraṅkṛta.  
Caritaṁ hyagrasēnasya śrutvāhaṁ tē munē kṛtī.

King Janamejaya continued, “O Maharshi, it is said that the **Kshirsagar**, the ocean of milk, brings relief from suffering. If that very ocean were further enriched with the cool rays of the Moon, the fragrant breezes of the Malaya mountains, and the fragrance of beautiful flowers, how wondrous it would become! In the same way, these sacred life stories of Samrat Agrasen possess all those qualities combined. They are profound, inspiring, and filled with wisdom. Hearing them from a great sage like you has brought me immeasurable joy and has completely pacified my mind.”

श्रवणादेव लप्स्यन्ते प्रतिष्ठाज्ञानसंपदा ।  
अग्रसेनस्य माहात्म्यान्नाधर्मस्तान् भजिष्यति ॥

**Śravaṇādēva lapsyantē pratiṣṭhājñānasampada.  
Agrasēnasya māhātmyānnādharmastān bhajiṣyati.**

“O Mahatma, by listening to these sacred life stories of Samrat Agrasen, the listener and his family will surely gain honour and wisdom in society. Whoever resolves to follow the principles established by Samrat Agrasen will never fall prey to temptation or unrighteousness. These profound narratives bring joy and are among the most sacred and divine stories in human history. They guide us toward the right path of life—Dharma (righteousness), Artha (prosperity), Karma (right action), and Moksha (liberation). Anyone who seeks wealth, success, land, or victory should listen to these stories with devotion and reverence.”



## **OBJECTIVES OF SHRI RAM KATHA SANSTHAN PERTH (INC)**

- Shri Ram Katha Sansthan Perth (Inc) is a Vaishnav, non-profit religious organization based on the principles established by Bhagwan Swami Shri Ramananda Ji Acharya (14th century).
- Shri Sansthan is non-discriminatory with respect to religion, caste, gender, and social status. Its guiding principle is: “Hari Ko Bhaje, So Hari Ko Hoi”—one who worships the Lord becomes dear to the Lord.
- Shri Sansthan believes that worship of the Lord with a pure heart and selfless attitude is most dear to Him. All devotees of the Lord are regarded as brothers and sisters.

### **Concept of Brahman (Supreme)**

- Lord Ram, Mother Sita, and their incarnations are the Supreme Brahman—omnipresent and the preservers of the Universe.

### **Concept of Jiva (Soul)**

- The existence of the Jiva (soul) depends upon Brahman. Lord Ram, Mother Sita, and their incarnations are the means to attain Moksha (salvation). Their eternal and omnipresent nature guides the soul toward liberation.

### **Concept of Maya (Illusion)**

- Maya is the cause of Prakruti (Nature or the material world), which is composed of three Gunas—Sat, Raj, and Tamas. Through these three qualities, Prakruti manifests

the world. Maya is governed by Brahman, and only Brahman can liberate the soul from it.

### **Concept of Moksha (Salvation)**

- The divine abode of Lord Ram and Mother Sita is Saket Dham. Through devotion, meditation, and prayer to them, devotees attain Moksha and are freed from the cycle of birth and death.
- Shri Sansthan continues to publish religious books, booklets, and magazines to fulfil these objectives. It also organizes Shri Ram Katha and other sacred narrations of Sanatan Rishis, Devas, Devis, and great devotees from time to time.

## AUTHOR: DR YATENDRA SHARMA



The author of this book, was born in a Sanatan Dharma Hindu family. Following family traditions, he developed deep interest in reading, listening to, and narrating religious scriptures since his childhood. He studied Sanskrit in his childhood from his grandfather Shri Bhagwan Das Ji and Shri Saligram Sharma Agnihotri Ji, the great scholar of Sanskrit and retired Principal of Naravar Sanskrit Mahavidyalay.

He completed his Doctorate in chemical technology from the Technical University of Graz, Austria, and served the mining and mineral industry of Western Australia for more than three decades.

In 2016, with the support of like-minded individuals, he founded a religious organisation '*Shri Ram Katha Sansthan Perth*', based on the teachings of Bhagwan Swami Ramananda Ji Acharya, and aligned the traditions of '*Shri Ramanandi Sampraday*'. The Sansthan continues to publish books and booklets on the lives of the great Sanatan Dharma Saints, Devs and Devis of Sanatan Dharma, with the aim of spreading awareness and preserving its rich culture and spiritual heritage.



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