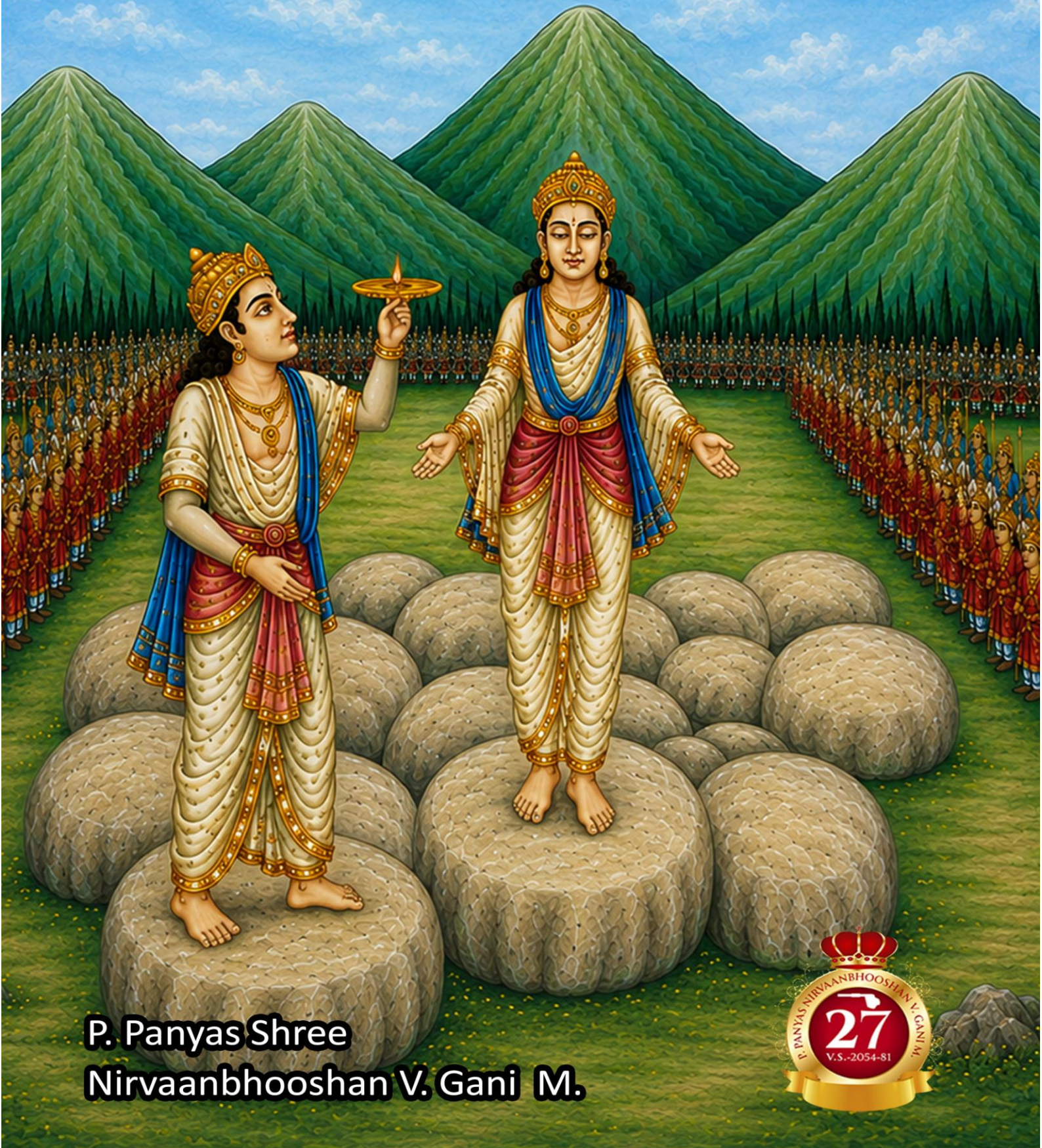


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Since P. Muniraj Shri Nirvaanbhooshan Vijayji has a good command over English language, even before this book, the English books written by him have been welcomed. In the same style and words, Mayanasundari's life events have been illustrated in English language. The pictures are stunning. English speaking readers will find such English publications useful. The most popular talks of Jain Ramayana are included with exclusive pictures. ‘Bhadrabahu’ is also too good. Pradyumna & Shamba with exclusive pictures is also best. Each book will inspire new generation, to walk on the path of humanity and Jainism

(Kalyan Magazine – Top magazine of Jainism) Yr.- 79/81. Volume -12/12

Guide: H.H.P.A.D.S.V. Purnachandra S.M.

This is the experience of years that the children learning in English medium don't have full understanding of Gujarati language. Gujarati discourses pass over their heads; even they feel Gujarati books boring. This is the condition of whole new generation. The age of cultivating moral values is being wasted in education and entertainment. This is the great matter of concern for the well-wishers of Shri Jain Sangh. All of them are concerned about how to make children virtuous, cultured, pious and afraid of sin .

Among many solutions, one solution, perhaps most simple and successful, is : tell the children the stories of Tirthankars, ascetics, great men and great women of virtue. All like stories; children like the most. In addition, it is a matter of experience that an inspiring life-character is more effective example than an inspiring preaching. The horrible results of sins and the sweet fruits of *dharma* can be explained in a simple way through stories.

The learned Muniraj Shri Nirvaanbhooshan Vijay understood this thing years ago and started right efforts in this direction. As a result, today 27 books compiled by him have been published. As these stories of Jain history is reaching to people, their demand is ever increasing. New editions of many books are being published.

It is a matter of delight that Munishri is making his contributions in this great *yagna* for familiarizing lakhs of children of Jain families with the best conduct, thinking, philosophy and history of Jain religion. May Munipravarshri continue to get more and more success in this challenging task – this is my heartfelt greetings!

Vijay Mokshrati Suri

V.S.2081 Mahasud 10, Akota, Vadodara

Thanks for Appreciable Letters / Opinions/ Guidance
which will give us the most potent force.

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1. Bharat and Bahubali

May Lord Rishabhdev, the lord of the yogis who illuminated the entire path of conduct at the beginning of the era, grant us unbroken wealth.

May Lord Shantinath, who renounced the wealth of the Chakravarti clan and embraced the wealth of restraint, become the source of salvation for all.

May Lord Neminath, whose birth purified the Yadu dynasty, become the source of eternal wealth.

May Lord Parshvanath, whose name instantly dissipates a chain of obstacles, bestow the wealth of well-being upon virtuous people.

May Lord Vir Vibhu, who is served under the pretext of stigma by a lion defeated by force, become the source of welfare for worldly beings.

May the name of Mahatmas, seekers of liberation, satis, and virtuous people bestow the wealth of salvation upon humans.

The hero of tapagachha Shri Munisundar Suri's disciple Subhshil composed Bharatadi Katha.

Thus, first in this matter-

Bharhesar Bahubali, Abhaykumaro A Dhandhankumaro |

Sirio Aniyautto, Aimutto Nagdatto A ||1||

There are thirteen sagas like Bharat - Bahubali, Abhaykumar, Dhandhan Kumar, Shriyak, Arnikaputra, Atimuktak and Nagdatt, etc.

The story about charity of Bharatchakravarti and Bahubali is not possible to say without the character of Lord Shri Rishabhdev. Therefore, first of all know the thirteen lives of Yugadi Dev :

1. Dhan Sarthvah, 2. Yuglik, 3. Dev in Saudharma Devlok, 4. Mahabal, 5. Lalitang Dev in Ishaan Devlok, 6. Vajrajangha, 7. Yuglik, 8. God in Saudharma Devlok, 6- Jeevanand Vaidya, 10- God in Achyuta Devlok, 11- Vajranabh Chakravarti, 12- God in Sarvartha Siddha Viman 13 - Rishabhdev Tirthankar.

Earlier there lived a rich man named Dhan in Kshitipratishthit city. He once thought that without Lakshmi (wealth) a man does not attain splendour. Because, a thorny forest inhabited by a group of lions and devoid of water, a bed made of grass, and clothes made of bark are still superior, but without wealth, living among relatives is difficult.

If wealth is there, all virtues come automatically, but when wealth goes, all the inherent virtues disappear. May the Lakshmi of the wealthy, who possess all the virtues, be victorious.

Laziness gives rise to stability, fickleness gives rise to patience, muteness gives rise to reticence, inertia becomes simplicity, and one who is devoid of consideration for the worthy and the unworthy, attains generosity. O Mother Lakshmi! By your grace, even faults are transformed into virtues.

Thinking this, Dhan Sarthvah announced in the city that he will go to Vasantpur for wealth.

Then, after meeting many people, the auspicious time was chosen for Revati Nakshatra, Friday, and Tritiya. Because, if there is Hasta on Sunday, Pushya with Thursday, Anuradha on Wednesday, Rohini on Saturday, Mrigashira with Monday, Revati on Friday, and Ashwini on Tuesday, these are Amrit Siddhi Yogas.

Ashwini, Pushya, Revati, Mrigashira, Mool, Punarvasu, Hasta, Jyeshtha, and Anuradha Nakshatras are good for travel.

When Dhan Sarthavah wished to go, Sri Dharmaghosasuri came there and, with Dharmalabh, sat on the seat offered by Dhan Sarthavah and narrated the religious story in the following manner:

Dharma, thief, fire, and king are the four heirs of wealth. If Dharma is disrespected, the remaining three forcibly take away the wealth of men.

Even a person crossing a two-mile path takes the path (bhaata). Whereas a foolish person does not take the path (bhaata) on the path of death.

O fool! For the benefit of this world and the next world, follow the path (bhaata) of religion, charity, penance, and chanting, because you never know where you will end up. That is, where your soul will go.

With the path (bhaata) of religion, in this life and the next, one attains the happiness of a god, Vidyadhar, and Nagendra, moon-like pure fame, and daily worship. Sin brings sorrow, the fate of a miserable dog, and great infamy. Therefore, O friend! Do what you like.

Hearing this, Dhan Sarthavah said, "Puja Shri, what is your work, give orders." The Guru said, "I am willing to go to Vasantpur city." Hearing this, Dhan Sarthavah said, "O Lord! Please bless me and come with me. I too will gain virtue by listening to the Dharma and bowing to you on the way." Then, on an auspicious day and with favorable omens like seeing the jackal, the neelkanth bird, and the peacock passing in front of them, Dhan Sarthavah departed with Sri Dharmaghosasuri,.

It is also said that seeing the jackal, the neelkanth bird, the peacock, the chatak bird, and the mongoose is auspicious; circumambulating them bestows all wealth.

If a crow makes a sweet call while going from right to left, all the wishes of the traveler are surely fulfilled.

Sighting the chakravaka, chatak, swan, special pigeon, crane, sparrow, water bird, crow, water fowl, and sheep is also auspicious. It is auspicious for the plover, kingfisher, and neelkanth bird to move towards the right.

A partridge, owl, and parrot in the left are considered auspicious, and a peacock and eagle moving from right to left are considered auspicious.

One day on the road, a plate full of ripe mangoes came as a gift to Sarthavah. Placing it before the Acharya, Sarthavah said, "Lord, please accept these mangoes, it will be a virtuous act."

Knowing his simple nature, the Acharya revealed to him the nature of living beings, non-living beings, and others.

Kindness is the root of religion, the mother of all living beings. The protection of both moving and stationary creatures is achieved through the path of asceticism. The nature of living beings is described by the Tirthankaras as follows.

When these nine living beings - earth body, water body, fire body, air body, plant body, two-sensed, three-sensed, four-sensed, five-sensed - are multiplied by mind, speech and body, they become twenty-seven. When they are multiplied by these three - doing, getting done and approving them, they become eighty-one. When these are multiplied by the three periods of time - present, past and future, they become two hundred and forty-three.

Whoever kills these living beings with mind, speech or body, that person falls into misery.

In this life, a person committing violence against living beings experiences suffering and in the next world, he experiences the suffering manifested in animals and hell. A person who protects living beings with mind, speech and body attains the chain of human happiness in this life and the next. A person who shows compassion to living beings is blessed with long life in the next world, a healthy body, unparalleled beauty, excellent strength, good fortune, unparalleled enjoyment in all three worlds, unblemished fame, obedience among relatives, and unwavering wealth.

Other scriptures also say that:

“O Yudhishtira! Donating Mount Meru made of gold or the entire earth is not even equivalent to giving life to a single living being.

Creatures desire happiness. But where is happiness without righteousness, and where is righteousness without mercy? Therefore, become passionate about mercy.”

The Shiva Agama called Hridayamanjari also states that:

Non-violence is said by virtuous people to be the beginning of all religions. Religion devoid of non-violence is certainly destroyed like an army without a leader.

The Gita also states, "O Arjuna! I exist within the earth, water, fire, air, vegetation, and all living beings. I do not destroy anyone who, knowing that I exist within them, never commits violence; nor does he destroy me."

The proverb "Where there is life, there is Shiva" proves that even immobile beings possess life. Therefore, sages should refrain from violence against any living being. Therefore, sages should consume non-living food and water. Therefore, it is not appropriate to consume these animate fruits. Then Dhan Sarthavah said, "Lord, from today onwards, I will consume only non-living foodstuffs." Thus, as the caravan proceeded, the rainy season arrived, and what a season it was.

Seedlings sprouted everywhere on Earth, water increased everywhere, inertia began to increase, and the entire Earth became devoid of lotuses. The turbid clouds have increased, the snakes have retreated into their burrows, and people have abandoned the path. Alas! There is great suffering, because this Kalikal has appeared on Earth as the rainy season. The clouds began raining, and mud and other things became unbearable. Therefore, Dhan Sarthavah halted the caravan at a good land near a mountain. The guru stayed in the shelter provided by Manibhadra Shravak. As the pathaya (bhaata) ran out, everyone began to eat roots and tubers. After two months there, Dhan Sarthavah suddenly remembered his guru. He thought, "I invited the acharya to the caravan, but not once did I care for his food and water. So, woe to me for accepting and then forgetting!" Those who do not perform the task they have accepted are called *adham* (sinner).

A group of mountains can move. The ocean can transcend its limits, but men with pure hearts remain unmoved by the work they undertake, even at the end of the world.

One should speak only as much as is necessary for their sustenance. Death destroys the dumbness of the dumbs, but living people should not become dumb.

At that very moment, Dhan Sarthavah stood up and bowed to the Guru. Then Dhan Sarthavah went to him and said, "O Lord! I am unfortunate. I have not even once taken care of you revered one, whom I invited to join the caravan. You would have been facing difficulty in sustaining."

The Guru said, "O fortunate one! There is a large caravan and many disciples. We receive and accept the inanimate food and water visible on their carts. I have come in your caravan and you have earned a lot of virtue. Sarthavah said, "Only those creatures earn virtue who give something with their own hands."

If the wise give food and water with their own hands, then those people get innumerable virtues, there is no doubt in this, that is, the donation given with one's own hands bears fruit quickly.

Does pouring ghee in an extinguished lamp increase its flame? No, it does not increase. Similarly, the Shraadh of dead creatures also does not give satisfaction.

Dhan Sarthavah said – “Send two saints, I will offer some inanimate food etc. there. Hearing and understanding his pure feelings, the Guru sent two sages to Sarthavah's place. Sarthavah's food had already run out, and when he looked in the vessels to offer it, he found nothing. Sarthavah got up to offer the remaining ghee in the vessel. Seeing his pure nature and the ghee, the sage accepted it. By offering the ghee, Sarthavah attained longevity in his human life, the merits of virtue, and righteousness. It is stated in the Jain Agam –

Some possess either wealth or a worthy person, others possess both. Only a blessed person possesses mind, wealth, and worthy people.

The scriptures also state –

Lord! What does a person who offers such inanimate and acceptable food, water, a servant, and delicious food do for such Shramanas?

The Lord said, "O Gautam!" Bound by the intense bonds of the eight types of karmic nature, he loosens those bonds, transforms a long-term situation into a short-term one, and crosses the long world of four gatis in less time.

The Bhagavati Sutra states –

Giving food, water, clothing, shelter, a place to sleep, a seat to the sages, and serving, worshipping, and enjoying in the mind results in nine types of virtues.

If any sage is not given anything imaginable, then the patient Shravak, who does as instructed, does not consume that food or other food.

And it is also said that–

O Yudhishtir! Donate food, which will quickly make you beloved in the world. What else is there to give? Donating food is the best donation.

Knowing the benefits of such donations, Dhan Sarthavah earned the merits of salvation through his devotion by donating ghee. Then, Dhan Sarthavah regularly visits the Upashraya to pay his respects to the gurus and listen to their teachings. Thus, the fundamental righteousness(Samyakatva) is in strengthening the Shravak Dharma, like a boat for crossing the ocean of the world.

The detached Lord has said:

The detached Lord is the God, the virtuous sage is the best guru, and the root of compassion is the true religion. This is called righteousness .

Jina's words are the essence; having interest in this subject is material righteousness ; and having complete pure feelings and faith is emotional righteousness .

Upon attaining Samyaktva, one becomes a Shravak after the passage of the Palyopam separation period. With the lapse of the Sankhyaata Sagaropam period, one attains Upasham Charitra.

One who attains Samyaktva after the last moment and finally vomits, his final remaining form is of 'half-pudgal paravart (a time period)'.

A person fallen in character should adopt Samyagdarshan (right vision). Because a person devoid of material character attains salvation, but without darshan, salvation is not attained.

Doing right in all places, having affection for virtues, attachment to the words of Jin, and mediation in the non-virtuous are the characteristics of a living being having right vision .

Kshayik and Aupshamik Samyaktva prevail in the first three hells. This same Samyaktva is prescribed for Vaimanik devas and Tiryanchs. Five types of Samyaktva have been formulated by Vitarag for the remaining Narakas, Tiryanchs, and three types of devas.

Upon the dissipation of the four bundles of vices, such as Anantanubandhi anger and the three bundles of right conduct, the soul attains auspiciousness and the non-potentially quiescent right conduct.

The falsehood that had arisen was diminished, the one that had not yet arisen was pacified, and the Veda that had transformed mixed thoughts into the equanimity of cessation and pacification.

Through the nectar of such good teachings, Dhan Sarthavah renounced falsehood and embraced right conduct.

Knowing the rising of the star Agastya at the end of the rainy season, Dhan Sarthavah departed from there.

O best sage! The rising of the star Agastya during the day brings severe drought, and then a father sells his son.

O best sage! When the star Agastya rises during the rainy season, the clouds pour only a little rain on the earth.

In due course, Dhan Sarthavah went to Vasantpur. With the wealth he had earned from the buying and selling there, Dhan Sarthavah returned to his city and when his final moments arrived, spent his wealth in seven regions. A devotee, a follower of the immaculate Shravak Dharma, Dhan Sarthavah died and was born in Uttarkuru, east of the Jambu tree on the left side of the Sita River.

There, ten types of Kalpavriksha trees grant desires.

It is said that – Matang, Bhring, Trutitaang, Deep, Jyoti, Chitrang, Chitrarasa, Manintang, Gehgara, and Aganita are the ten Kalpavriksha trees.

The Matang tree provides wine and sweet beverages, the Bhring tree provides utensils, and the Trutitaang tree provides many types of musical instruments. The trees named Deepshikha and Jyotishi provide light, the Chitrang tree provides garlands of flowers, and the Chitrarasa tree provides food, Manintang and Grihakar give best ornaments and buildings and Anintang trees give many types of clothes.

In this way, after experiencing the pleasures of living among ten types of Kalpavriksha, he died at the end of his life and was born as a god in Saudharma Devlok due to the effect of charity and virtue done in his previous birth. Thus the third life was completed.

After enjoying the pleasures there for a long time, leaving from there, that god was born as the son of Shatbal Vidyadhar named Mahabal in the western Videha, in the Vijay named Gandhilavati, on the Vaitadhya mountain, in the fragrance-rich city of Gandhar country. When the time came, he was crowned king by his father. One day, while enjoying the pleasures of the kingdom and listening to music, the king was urged by his secretary, Swayambuddha –

"Knowing that human lifespan is as unstable as water falling on lotus leaves, you fail to recognize the truth preached by Jineshwara. Shame on your negligence!"

With this untimely advice, the king asked the minister, "What is this?" The minister replied, "Today, while in the forest, I inquired of the extent of your lifespan from a Charan Muni, who replied, "The king's lifespan is one month." With such words, the king said to the minister, "O Swayambuddha! Today, with little time left in the night, I dreamt that I was thrown into a dark well by various chief ministers, but was pulled out by you. Thus, your advice quickly revealed to me the true meaning of the dream." That king, knowing the decline of his age was in a panic like what to do and what not to do. He was assured by his minister–

Any soul with a concentrated mind who has taken up the vow of renunciation for even a single day attains salvation. If he does not attain salvation, he will certainly become a Vaimanik deity.

Thus, by adopting the conduct prescribed by Jain principles and attaining happiness, make your life fruitful and attain the joys of the next world. Hearing these words from the minister, the king installed his son in the kingdom and took initiation from his guru during the Ashtahanika festival. The king, doing anshan according to the guru's instructions, died in meditation and was reborn as a deity named Lalitanga in the Sriprabh Vimana within the Ishan Devlok, with a body resplendent and radiant. His wife was a goddess named Swayamprabha. After enjoying divine pleasures with her for a long time, the goddess Swayamprabha, who had completed her age, descended from heaven. Lalitanga was grief-stricken by the separation from her. Even while playing in the gardens, he found no joy. Because–

Even the gods, adorned with divine ornaments, are departed from the heavenly realm. Due to which, their suffering is terrifying.

Despite the gods' splendor and the departure from the heavenly realm, the gods pound their hearts with their hands, which cannot be broken even by hundreds of stones. Even the gods are tormented by jealousy, disputes, pride, anger, illusion, and greed, so where can they find happiness? Meanwhile, Swayambuddha minister died after observing a ansan (fast till death) and became equivalent to Indra named Dridhadharma in the same heavenly realm.

Salvation is attained through austerity and discipline, the best of pleasures through charity, kingdom through worship of God, and Indrahood is attained through death by ansan.

Being a friend from his previous life, the god, seeing Lalitaang distraught with separation, asked him to alleviate his grief.

The qualities of sensuality can only tame a coward, but cannot control virtuous men, for a thread can only bind a mosquito, not an elephant.

A man who sinks his boat of mind in the ocean of a woman's affection loses his wisdom, modesty, courage, saintliness, and patience.

In this life, which is compared with evening love and water bubbles, even in youth as playful as a drop of water and as swift as a river, O sinful soul! Why don't you attain enlightenment?

Two-pada, three-pada, four-pada multiple padas, apada, prosperity and improsperity all pass away suddenly, without time, and when they are attained, grief and joy arise in the heart. Even after being preached in this manner by the deity, Lalitaang did not get relieved from his attachment even a little. Then the deity Dridhadharma told him the way to attain the goddess that in Nanda village of eastern Videha in Dhataki Khand, after seven sons of the poor Nagil Shresthi, his wife gave birth to an ugly and unfortunate daughter as the eighth child. Due to poverty, the father ran away. Due to this distress, the child was not given a name and hence was named Nirnamika. Nirnamika gradually grew up. One day, Nirnamika went to collect wood on the Gagantilak mountain. There, she heard a sage named Yugandhar, who was having Keval gyan, sitting on the throne and preaching the religion.

Age is unstable like the wind, strength is mortal like the rainbow, youth is like the light of lightning, wealth is fickle like the gurgling of a waterfall. Knowing quickly moving affection like the ears of an elephant, and body suffering from and disease, O noble ones! Always practice the great and unshakable Dharma.

Poverty is destroyed by charity, misery is destroyed by virtue, ignorance is destroyed by wisdom, and the cycle of birth and death is destroyed by feelings.

In this way, after listening to the Dharma from the Guru, Nirnamika, who had attained the life of a householder, is present here and has just taken up fasting. Therefore, go there and show her your form and tell her that Nirnamika will fall in love with you and after death, will be born as Swayamprabha in this very heaven. By doing this,

Nirnamika became the wife of Lalitaang in that Devlok. Then that Dev lived happily with that wife and was happy. Thus, the fourth life of Lalitaang Dev was completed.

From there, after the age diminished, Lalitaang Dev was born as the son of Lakshmi Devi and King Swarnjangh, in the city of Lohargal of Pushkalavati Vijay, on the north bank of Sita river in Videha, east of Jambudweep. He was named Vajrajangh and was like Kamdeva. The father celebrated the birth and Vajrajangh attained the age of youth in sequence. Similarly, Swayamprabha also was born from the heaven and was born as a daughter named Shrimati to Vajrasena Tirthankar and Chakravarti in the city of Pundarikini in the same Vijay. Consequently, she also became the one with a body adorned with youth. Once, Shrimati, after seeing the Kevalgyani Muni in the nearby forest, attained the knowledge of her past lives. Then, determined to make her husband the man who was her husband in previous life, she got her previous life's form painted on her father's instructions and said– I will marry the young prince who will tell me about my previous life.

Then she decorated the Swayamvar mandap and invited many kings and princes, but none of those kings could tell about her previous life.

When some conditions were not met, Vajrajangha Kumar arrived and, seeing his past lives depicted on the canvas, suddenly gained the knowledge of his past lives. The Kumar then related the signs of his past lives that were in the Kumari's heart. She then recognized him as her husband from her previous life and married him, garlanding him. Vajrajangha then married her with great pomp and ceremony. Then, after Vajrajangha returned to his city, Swarnajangha handed over the kingdom to his son and took initiation himself. Having inherited the kingdom, Vajrajangha ruled the earth through the path of justice. It is said that a king who protects the entire kingdom inherited from his ancestors with justice attains heaven.

As is the king, so are his subjects. If the king is righteous, so are his subjects. If the king is sinful, so are his subjects. If the king is impartial, so are his subjects, because the people follow the king.

Consequently, Vajrajangha had a son. He named him Vajra. Once, he went to help Pushkalpal, the brother of his wife, who was suffering from the neighbouring kings. While on the way, Vajrajangha heard a snake on the same road and went there and enlightened that snake with his vision. Then he went to Pushkalavati city. After killing all the enemies of Pushkalpal who had come there, he proceeded towards his city. On this side, two sages meditating on the same road attained Keval gyan due to the destruction of all their karmas. Vajrajangha along with his wife paid obeisance to two sages named Munisen and Sagarsen. After listening to the teachings of those two sages, he returned to his city.

Once, Vajrajangha said to his wife, O dear! I will take initiation; you follow the householder's religion.

The wife said, "I already desire to be initiated. If you accept, I will also be initiated with you." Meanwhile, the son, unaware of his parents' vow of restraint, desired to poison them. Therefore, the son, who had the desire of kingdom, poisoned and killed his parents. Thus, Vajrajangha's sixth life was completed.

Through auspicious meditation, they both died and were reborn in Uttar Kuru. Through the Yugalik Dharma, they fulfilled their desires with the help of ten types of Kalpavriksha trees and became happy. Thus, Yugalik's seventh life was completed.

After dying there, both became gods with mutual affection in the first heaven. They were extremely happy there. Thus, the god's eighth life was completed.

Vajrajangha's soul was released from the Devlok and was born as a son named Jivanand to Suvidhi Vaidya in Kshitipratishthit city in Videh in Jambudweep. This city was like the Devlok. In the same city, King Ishanchandra had a son named Mahidhar. The minister had a son named Subuddhi. Sarthvah had a son named Purnabhadra. Shresthi's son was Gunakar. Shrimati's soul was taken from heaven and became the same Shresthi's son named Keshav. He was very friendly with Jivanand. Once, when the five friends were at Jivanand Vaidya's house, a Jain monk named Gunakar, whose body was ailing from leprosy, came for Parana. Seeing the monk's leprosy-stricken body, they contemplated among themselves, "This monk appears to be suffering greatly from the disease." Then, with compassion, Jivanand said, "This Muni Bhagwant should be cured, even at great expense. For this, we should find Lakshapak oil, Goshirshachandan, and a blanket of gems. The oil is available at my house. The remaining two items will have to be found. This sage, a very fortunate ascetic, is independent of his body. If we benefit him by curing his leprosy, we will earn the karma necessary for liberation. Because:

A person becomes wise through the donation of knowledge, fearless through the donation of protection, happy through the donation of food, and always free from disease through the donation of medicine.

To obtain the medicine, Mahidhar and the other five, along with Jivanand, went to a wealthy friend's shop and asked for Goshirshachandan, and a blanket of gems for the sage. With a sense of righteousness, he gave both items free of cost and said, "I will also earn virtue. Giving medicine to sinners is a sin, while giving medicine to the righteous is a virtue. The righteous person performs righteous deeds. The Vaidya and the one who administers the medicine also receive that merit." Then, all the friends took the medicines to the forest. First, the sage's body was massaged with the oil. When the sage's body became extremely hot due to the effect of that oil, he was covered with the gem-blanket. The insects living on the body of the sage, distressed by the heat, got attached to the gem-blanket. Then, the compassionate Vaidya placed those insects on a fresh cow carcass. Then, for cooling, he had Goshirshachandan applied on his body. After healing the sage through this process three times, he asked for forgiveness in this way, "O Lord! Forgive me for any sin I have committed against you." After that, he bowed to the sage and went to his place, informing the Shresthi

that he had cured the sage of his disease by his two medicines. And that Shreshthi, appreciating the virtue of giving that medicine, attained Kevalgyan in his householder form due to the destruction of all his karmas (Such an account is also available that the rich man took initiation somewhere).

Those friends also sold the remaining Goshirshachandan paste and gem-blanket and used their wealth of two lakh gold coins to build their own Jain temple. Thus, the Vaidya's ninth life was completed. He and Jivanand etc. all embraced pravrajya and, after dying there, became a deity in the Achyuta Devlok with a lifespan of twenty-two Sagaropams. Thus, the tenth life was completed.

Now, descending from there, the soul of Jivanand, after being informed by fourteen dreams, came in the womb of Dharani Devi, the wife of the Tirthankara King Vajrasena, in the city of Pushkalavati Vijay in the eastern Videha of Jambudweep, and was born as their son. The elder son was named Vajranabh. The souls of the king, the minister, the Shreshthi, and Sarthvah, were born there as his four younger brothers named Bahu, Subahu Peeth, and Maha Peeth, respectively. Keshav's soul descended from heaven and became the son of a king named Suyash. Vajrasen then gave his son the kingdom. Upon hearing the Lokantik Dev's chant "Jai Jai Nanda," he received initiation by making annual donations and consequently attained Kevalgyan. Having acquired the entire kingdom of six regions, Vajranabh became the Chakravarti. Once, Shri Vajrasen Tirthankar visited the same city. Vajranabh's family went to listen to the preachings of their father, the Tirthankar. Jinendra preached this sermon:

A householder's mind is constantly filled with worries: "I haven't received wealth, I haven't acquired knowledge, my sons haven't become wealthy or virtuous, my family isn't happy, the king harbors hatred. Evil men cast evil eyes on me, my body is afflicted with disease, and my sons are burdened with debt."

A prudent man begins to accumulate new virtues before the virtues accumulated in his previous life are exhausted. And unwise men, even though devoid of the substance of righteousness, do not take steps to acquire the wealth of righteousness, like one who consumes the seed.

Vajranabh, developing detachment upon hearing such a sermon, accepted wealth in the form of restraint, along with his brothers Bahu, Subahu, Peeth, Mahapeeth, and Suyash. Consequently, Vajranabh Muni, studying under his guru, became the possessor of the twelve Agamas, while the remaining monks became possessors of the eleven Agamas. Vajranabh attained the status of a Tirthankar by worshipping the twenty Sthanakas, including Arihant etc.. It is said that -

Through the twenty beautiful Sthanakas, Vajranabh created the Tirthankar Naamkarma, which saves one from the ocean of the world.

Because –

The living being attains the post of Tirthankar due to affection for arihant, siddha, pravachan, acharya, sthavir, bahushrut and ascetics, continuous use of knowledge in these, darshan, modesty, no trespass in modesty and fasting, momentary love, penance, renunciation and samadhi in vayavachcha, assimilation of unexplored knowledge, and influence of shruta-bhakti discourse.

Bahu Muni acquired the karma of Chakravartitva by bringing pure food and dividing it and giving it to the sages.

Subahu Muni himself acquired immense power and karma by serving five hundred saints.

Bahu and Subahu Muni acquired new virtue by performing Vaiyavachcha and service and care of Vajranabh Guru.

Whenever the Guru appears, he praises both of them. Then Peeth and Mahapeeth could not tolerate his praise in their minds.

Peeth and Mahapeeth, who were deeply involved in illusion, jealousy and falsehood, bound the karma of womanhood.

A person who is fickle, deceitful, deceives his relatives through illusion and fraud, and is not trustworthy by anyone, becomes a woman.

Muni Suyasha, by continuously practicing dharma there, attained the karma of unbroken liberation. Thus, the eleventh life was completed.

All of them, after maintaining the immaculate initiation for fourteen lakh years, died in meditation at the end of their lives and were reborn in the Svarthasiddha Vimana. Thus, the twelfth life ended.

On this side, when an eighth of the last Palyopam remained at the end of the third Aara of the Avasarpini named Sushamduṣhama, in the southern Bharat of this Jambudvīpa, between the Ganga and Sindhu rivers, the first Kulkar named Vimalvahan was born. His wife was Chandrayāṣa. At that time, due to the degradation of time and the shortage of Kalpavriksha trees, the Hakaar policy was implemented among the quarreling couples. When they both had six months of life left, a couple named Chakshmaan and Chandrakanta were born to them. From them were born a couple named Yashasvi and Swaroopa. The Makaar policy was started in their kingdom. From them was born the twin pair (Yugal) of Abhichandra and Priyangu.

The first Kulkar had a body length of nine hundred bows, the second Kulkar eight hundred bows, the third Kulkar seven hundred and fifty bows, the fourth Kulkar seven hundred bows, the fifth Kulkar six hundred and fifty bows, the sixth Kulkar six hundred bows, the seventh Kulkar five hundred and twenty-five bows.

Sanghayan, Sansthan, Uchchtva are the same in Kulkars. All have similar appearance and are of Priyangu colour.

Both of them were blessed with Prasenjit and Purnakanta as a pair. Dhikkar policy was started during their time. The pair of Marudev and Srikanta were born as their children. From them came the seventh Kulkar pair of Nabhi and Marudeva. Nabhi and Marudevi both had a body of five hundred and twenty-five bows. In this way, before eightyfour lakh years of the third Aara, when 3 years, 8 months and 15 days was left , after experiencing 33 Sagaropam of age, in Uttarashadha Nakshatra of Ashadh Shukla Chaturdashi, the soul of Shri Vajranabh descended from Sarvarthasiddha Viman to the womb of Marudevi in the form of Tirthankar, which was informed by the fourteen great dreams of Mati, Shrut, Elephant etc.. Then the creatures of hell also felt happy because on his Kalyanak festival even the creatures of hell are happy.

Who is capable of describing the holy character of such a Lord?

At that time, dream readings were not performed. Saudharmendra, devoted to the Lord, then sent his Abhiyogik servants to protect his master. Nine months and seven and a half days later, on Chaitra Krishnashtami, when the moon was in the Uttarashadha Nakshatra, Mother Marudevi gave birth to the first Tirthankara, a son with a body measuring five hundred bows long, a golden body, and a bull's mark, all remarkable characteristics, with the Yugalik Dharma. Saudharmendra performed the Janmabhishek. He named him Vrishabha because of taste of his thumb watered with nectar, bull's mark on his growing body, and seeing the first bull in his dream. The girl born as a pair was named Sumangala. When Vrishabha was a little less than a year old, Saudharmendra came with a Ikshudand(sugarcane stalk) to pay obeisance to the Lord and establish the dynasty. At that time, Vrishabha, being of childlike nature, reached out to take the sugarcane stalk, wanting to eat. Then the lineage of Vrishabha was named by Shakrendra as Ikshvaku. Thereafter, deities used to bring fruits from Uttarakuru and water from the ocean of milk everyday for the Lord. Now, when the Lord attained the age of ten, the Yugalik man met with a premature death on his birthday due to a falling palm fruit. His wife, named Sunanda, however survived. Therefore, Shrinabhikulkar is called by the Yugaliks as the form of death

Subsequently, as King Nabhi was arranging the Lord's marriage to Sumangala and Sunanda, Indra– perceiving the event through his Avadhi Gyan (clairvoyant knowledge), arrived at the venue accompanied by a host of celestial nymphs (Apsaras). The Lord, recognizing that these were karmic consequences that inevitably had to be experienced, gave his consent. Then, the Lord, who had already been bathed, anointed with fragrant pastes, and adorned with magnificent jewelry by the celestial nursemaids (Dhatris), was escorted to the pavilion alongside Sumangala and Sunanda. At the entrance of the pavilion, Indra performed an auspicious ritual for the Lord using curd, grass, salt, and other sacred items; thereafter, Indra returned to the Devlok. Marudevi bestowed the following auspicious blessings upon the newlywed Lord:

"O Son! O living Kalpa-tree (wish-fulfilling tree)! May you extend the hundreds of branches of your spiritual wisdom (Bodha) and continuously fulfill the cherished desires of the entire world!" Thus, the Lord received the blessings of His mother, the mother of a Tirthankara, who bestowed such profound and truthful benedictions upon Rishabhadeva, the husband of her two daughters-in-law. After a period of slightly less than six hundred thousand years had elapsed, the souls of Bahu and Peeth descended from the Sarvarth Siddha Viman to the womb of Sumangala Devi. At that time, Sumangala saw the fourteen auspicious Mahasvapna (great dreams), such as elephant etc. In due course, a grand festival was celebrated to mark the birth of both children; the son was named Bharat, and the daughter was named Brahmi. Meanwhile, the souls destined to become Subahu and Mahapeeth were born as a pair (Yugal) from the womb of Sunanda. The male child was named Bahubali, and the female child was named Sundari. Subsequently, Sumangala gave birth to forty-nine additional pairs of sons. Thus, Rishabhadeva ultimately had one hundred sons and two daughters—Brahmi and Sundari.

When the Kalpavrikshas (wish-fulfilling trees) began to diminish in their power to yield fruit, and as the Yugalikas (pairs) became increasingly prone to passions, eager to transgress moral codes and social norms, and inclined toward mutual strife, Shri Nabhi Kulkar entrusted them to the care of Shri Rishabhdev to restore order and discipline. Subsequently, the Yugalikas gathered together, seated the Lord upon a raised platform, and holding lotus leaves in their hands, proceeded to a reservoir to fetch water for his ceremonial bath. Meanwhile, Indra descended from the Devlok, seated the Lord upon a magnificent jeweled throne, anointed him with the essence of Bavana sandalwood, adorned him with fine garments and ornaments, and then stood by in secrecy. Meanwhile, the Yugalikas returned with water gathered in their lotus leaves; beholding the Lord in his resplendent state, they circumambulated him and started thinking amongst themselves: "If we pour the water upon his head, all his garments will be soiled." Therefore, they performed the consecration solely below the Lord's feet. Pleased by their humility and reverence, Indra revealed himself, bowed to the Lord with deep devotion, and saying, "These Yugalikas are indeed well-disciplined", established a new city at that place, named Vinita, measuring twelve yojanas in width and nine yojanas in length. The Lord appointed various Yugalikas as ministers, designated others as guardians of the fortress, placed some in the esteemed role of spiritual preceptors, elevated certain companions to positions of royal authority, and assigned the remaining Yugalikas the duties of warriors and soldiers. Thereafter, the Lord directed the collection of various animals, including elephants, horses, cows, and buffaloes. Now, with the Kalpavriksha having destroyed, the Yugalikas, keen to consuming raw cereals, began to suffer from digestive ailments; the Lord then instructed them to hold their grain either in the palms of their hands or in the side of the hands.

When the Yugalikas returned to the Lord, suffering from indigestion caused by their continued consumption of raw food, the Lord instructed them to rub the grain between their two hands before eating.

Upon their doing so, fire was generated. Upon witnessing this occurrence, they were struck with fear; approaching the Lord, they said: "O Lord! We were in the midst of consuming our grain when a demon suddenly manifested." Perceiving through his divine omniscience that this manifestation was, in reality, the emergence of fire, the Lord instructed them: "Place your grain amidst this fire-like 'demon' and then consume it." When they proceeded to follow these instructions, the fire— in the guise of a demon— devoured the entirety of their grain; they returned to the Lord once more to report this. Thereupon, while seated upon the frontal dome of an elephant, Lord Rishabh summoned some clay; he made a pot with his own hands and presented it to them, instructing: "Create vessels such as this, fire them in the kiln, place your grain inside them, and then consume it." From that moment on, they consumed their grain in the manner prescribed by the Lord, and through this method, they all attained happiness and contentment.

Subsequently, the Lord revealed and established a hundred distinct crafts and trades, which the populace then adopted and practiced. He also promulgated the four principles of statecraft: Sam (conciliation), Dam (inducement/gifts), Danda (punishment), and Bheda (division). He imparted the seventy-two arts befitting men to his son Bharat, and the sixty-four arts befitting women to his son Bahubali. Furthermore, the Lord expounded upon the distinguishing characteristics and auspicious signs of various animals, such as elephants and horses. With his right hand, he taught eighteen distinct scripts to his daughter Brahmi, and with his left hand, he imparted the science of mathematics to his daughter Sundari.

The Lokantika Devas approached the Lord and said: "O Lord, it is time for you to establish and propagate the Dharma Tirth." Guided by his Avadhi Gyan (clairvoyant knowledge), the Lord discerned that the auspicious moment for his renunciation had arrived. He bestowed the kingdom of Ayodhya upon Bharat, the kingdom of Bahli upon Bahubali, and distributed various cities, villages, and territories among his remaining sons according to their respective merits; following this distribution, he performed the Samvatsarika Dan (the annual great charity) giving away all his worldly possessions. Having enjoyed the splendor of his unhindered sovereignty, a reign spanning sixty-three Purva years, the Lord set forth on his path of renunciation. This momentous event occurred during the spring season— a time of exquisite beauty adorned by eighteen varieties of blossoming flora— on the Krishna Ashtami of the Chaitra month, when the moon was in the Uttarashadh constellation. Seated upon a palanquin named Sudarshana – borne aloft by Devas and Asuras— and attended by a host of kings and celestial rulers, including Indra, the Lord proceeded.

The Lord arrived at the garden named Siddharth, where the celestial drums were resounding. Descending from the palanquin beneath an Ashoka tree, the Lord

renounced his garments and ornaments; thereafter, clad in the Devdushya bestowed by Indra, the Lord performed the Loch (plucking out of hair) in four handfuls. At that moment, acceding to Indra's request, the Lord left a single handful of hair remaining upon his head. Having directed Indra to silence the surrounding clamor, the Lord embraced the ascetic life while uttering the sacred salutation. At that very instant, the fourth form of knowledge– Manah-paryaya Gyan)– manifested within Rishabhadev. It is said that:

Having ascended the path of spiritual conduct, the Lord paid homage to all the Siddhas and resolved to not commit any sinful acts.

While a Tirthankara remains in the state of a householder, he is endowed with three forms of knowledge; however, upon embracing the ascetic life during the Chhadmastha phase, he becomes the possessor of four forms of knowledge.

Subsequently– despite the dissuasions of numerous kings such as Bharat– four thousand other kings, led by Kachchha and Mahakachchha, also embraced the ascetic life alongside the Lord. Once Indra and the other Dev s had departed for their respective abodes, the Lord set out on his spiritual wandering (Vihar). Compelled by the inauspicious karma accumulated in a previous life, the Lord received no alms; thus, having wandered without food for a full year, He arrived at the city of Gajpur. Residing there was Shreyans, the son of Somayasha– who was, in turn, the son of Bahubali. King Somayasha beheld a dream in which a mighty warrior, previously captured by his enemies, attained victory through the assistance of Shreyans. Shreshthi witnessed a dream in which a cluster of sunbeams– having become scattered– was once again restored to its rightful place by the young Shreyans. Furthermore, Shreyans himself experienced a dream in which Mount Meru– having become sullied– was cleansed and restored to pristine brilliance by his own hands.

"Surely, Shreyans is destined to receive some magnificent boon today"– with this thought arising in the morning, the three of them returned to their respective homes.

Upon hearing the clamor of the people– who were exclaiming that Lord Rishabh was accepting nothing– Prince Shreyans rushed from his window toward the Lord.

Upon beholding the Lord, Shreyans attained Jati-smaran Gyan (knowledge of past lives); recalling his acceptance of ascetic vows in his nine previous incarnations, and perceiving the Lord's readiness to accept food, Shreyans resolved to offer him pure, unblemished sustenance. At that moment– declining the elephants, horses, maidens, jewelry, and other gifts being offered by the crowds– the Lord arrived at the residence of Prince Shreyans. Just then, a hundred pitchers filled with sugarcane juice were unexpectedly presented to Prince Shreyans as a gift from a certain king. Recognizing this sugarcane juice as flawless, unblemished food (Niravadya Aahar), and filled with overwhelming joy, Shreyans folded his hands in reverence and addressed the Lord: "O Lord! Quickly extend both your hands and grant me salvation. Please accept this food, which is free from dietary impurities."

Here, the poet employs a poetic conceit: observing that the Lord's right hand did not move to accept the alms, He spoke to it, asking, "O Right Hand! Why do you not accept this alms?" The Right Hand replied: "How can I accept alms while positioned beneath the hand of the giver? Because, I am perpetually engaged in noble endeavors such as worship, dining, acts of charity, rites of peace, artistic pursuits, the ceremonial joining of hands during marriage, sacred installations, acts of purification, the offering of one's hand in assistance, and the giving of one's word."

Then the Left Hand spoke up:

"I am the one that faces the enemy on the battlefield; I am engaged in the calculation of numbers; and I assist in such acts as sleeping on one's left side. Therefore, let the Right Hand— which is associated with such vices as gambling— be the one to accept alms at the home of a wealthy man."

"You have acquired the wealth of a kingdom, and through acts of charity, you have obliged many supplicants; and though you remain perpetually content, out of compassion for the giver, now accept this alms." Having thus instructed his hands for a full year, Lord Rishabhdev accepted the offering of Ikshu rasa (sugarcane juice) presented by Shreyans Kumar, filling his hands to the brim with the sweet nectar. May such a Lord Rishabhdev protect you.

Upon the Lord's Parana (breaking of the fast), Shreyans' fame spread across the entire earth, and the courtyard of his home was filled with twelve and a half crore gold coins.

Exclamations of "Oh, the glory of charity! Oh, the glory of charity!" resounded; the music of divine instruments filled the air, and eager Dev s showered down fragrant water.

The three worlds were filled with the fame of Shreyans Kumar; the Lord's hands were filled with the nectar of sugarcane juice; Shreyans Kumar's courtyard was filled with a shower of gold; and his soul attained incomparable bliss. Thus, charity bestowed upon a worthy recipient is of immense value.

Search far and wide— if you can find a worthy recipient equal to Lord Rishabhdev, an offering as pure as the sugarcane juice, or a spirit of devotion equal to that of Shreyans Kumar.

Meanwhile, ascetics such as Kachchha— having failed to obtain alms— retired into the forest and became hermits. Today, people refer to them as Jatadharis (those with matted locks). As for Nami and Vinami— the two sons of these ascetics— they had traveled far away and returned only after the Lord had already embraced asceticism. Having no desire to serve under Bharat, the two brothers approached Lord Rishabhdev and said, "O Lord! We are your servants; therefore, we shall ask for nothing— neither a kingdom nor any other material possession— from Bharat." Wherever the Lord set foot, the two brothers would clear away thorns and other obstacles. Whenever the Lord stood in Kayotsarg (meditative posture), the two brothers would stand guard on

either side of Him, swords in hand, rendering their service. Every morning, after worshipping the Lord with lotus blossoms, they would daily urge Him, saying, "Please grant us a kingdom."

Once, Dharanendra arrived at the scene and addressed them, saying, "O Nami and Vinami! You both appear to be seekers of a kingdom; but, the Lord is devoid of all attachment and material possessions; therefore, ask Bharat for the kingdom." To this, the two brothers replied, "If the Lord grants us the kingdom, then so be it; otherwise, we shall both remain right here." Recognizing the unwavering devotion of the two brothers, Dharanendra assumed the form of the Lord, entered His mouth [to speak], and said, "You both must proceed to Mount Vaitadhya; there, I shall bestow a kingdom upon you." Subsequently, Dharanendra assumed the guise of Lord Rishabha, traveled to Mount Vaitadhya, and granted the two brothers dominion over the Southern and Northern Ranges of the mountain. He also bestowed upon them four thousand Vidya (supernatural sciences), such as Pragyapti.

It is said: "Nami and Vinami were so deeply immersed in humble service to the Lord that they became the supreme rulers of the Vidyadharas. Service rendered at the feet of great souls is never in vain."

Nagendra led these two brothers— Nami and Vinami— to Mount Vaitadhya, where he imparted the Vidya to them and granted them sixty cities in the Northern Range and fifty cities in the Southern Range.

One day, while wandering (Vihar), the Lord arrived in the evening at a garden situated outside the city of Takshashila— the jewel of the Bahli region— and entered a state of Kayotsarg. Upon learning of his father's arrival, Bahubali reflected, "It would not be befitting for me to go and pay my respects during the night; therefore, I shall go to offer my salutations tomorrow morning with great pomp and ceremony." Having resolved this, Bahubali set out the following morning with grand fanfare to pay his respects; however, by the time he arrived, the Lord had already departed to continue his journey. Distraught at not finding the Lord there, Bahubali began to weep, crying out, "O Lord! Where have You gone? Please grant me Your divine vision just once!" Eventually, finding solace in the words of his ministers, Bahubali erected a magnificent, gem-encrusted Stupa at that very spot, enshrining within it the Lord's sacred footprints.

The Lord— who had embraced the vow of silence— concluded his thousand-year period of silent austerity. He then stood beneath a banyan tree within the Shakat forest, located in the city of Purimtal, having observed the Attham penance. It was the dawn of eleventh day of the dark fortnight of the month of Phalgun, under the Uttarashadha nakshatra, the Lord attained Kevalgyan. At that moment, all the Devs, in accordance with their respective rights, gathered there and constructed the Samavasaran (the divine assembly hall). Then, uttering the mantra "Namo Titthassa" (Salutation to the Tirth), the Lord took his seat upon the divine throne, and the twelve-fold assembly also took their seats.

Meanwhile, in Bharat's armory, the Chakra-ratna (the divine discus-gem) manifested. Thus, the news of the Chakra-ratna manifestation and the news of the Lord's attainment of Kevalgyan— both joyous tidings— arrived before Bharat simultaneously. Bharat then pondered: "Should I first worship the Chakra, or should I worship the Yugadi Dev?" Having thought thus, in an instant, Bharat reproached himself, thinking: "Woe unto me for even having such a thought!"

Because, by worshipping the Lord, the Chakra is worshipped automatically; indeed, the Lord alone is the true object of worship. This is because the Chakra is merely the source of worldly pleasures, whereas the Lord is the bestower of the bliss of the afterlife.

Thereafter, seating his grandmother Marudevi— whose eyes had become clouded due to the tears she had shed over the separation from her son— upon the forehead of a majestic elephant, Bharat set forth to pay homage to the Lord. Upon beholding the Samavasaran, Bharat exclaimed: "O Grandmother! Behold the magnificent glory of your son, and listen to the resounding beat of the celestial drums! How insignificant is my own meager grandeur compared to the boundless magnificence of your son! The difference between the two is as vast as that between Mount Meru and a mustard seed, between a swan and a crow, between the wish-fulfilling Chintamani gem and a mere pebble, and between a king and a pauper."

Upon hearing the sound of the celestial drums, tears of sheer joy welled up in Marudevi's eyes; as these tears flowed, the cataracts obscuring her vision cleared away, and she was able to behold the Samavasaran. At that very moment— having attained Omniscience through the complete eradication of all karmas, and having reached the natural conclusion of her lifespan— Marudevi attained Moksha (liberation).

Here, the revered author states:

In this universe, there is no son comparable to Rishabhadev— one who, having attained Kevalgyan after wandering the earth for a thousand years, immediately offered it to his mother out of immense affection for her.

O souls! If you are unable to renounce worldly existence, then cultivate an intense attachment toward the Jineshwar; for it was through such attachment that Mother Marudevi— even while seated upon an elephant— attained Moksha (liberation).

Thereupon, the Dev s arrived and performed the rites of cremation. Bharat proceeded to the Samavasaran, circumambulated the Lord three times in reverence, bowed before Him, and took his seat to listen to the discourse on Dharma. To alleviate Bharat's grief, the Lord delivered the following religious instruction:

In this boundless ocean of worldly existence(Sansar), it is exceedingly rare to find the "ship" of a noble lineage, a high caste, physical strength, and— above all— a human birth.

Those who attain Samyaktva during their human life become capable of navigating this ocean of Sansar without drowning in it; instead, they attain the celestial city of Moksha.

Greed is the root of sin; indulgence in sensory pleasures is the root of disease; and affection (Sneha) is the root of suffering. Therefore, O soul! Renounce these three and attain true happiness.

Despite knowing that there is absolutely no true happiness in this insubstantial world—which is rife with disease and suffering—the soul still fails to practice the Dharma expounded by the Jineshwar.

Life is transient, worldly prosperity is fickle, and youth itself is as momentary as the fleeting hues of twilight; yet, even while witnessing these truths with his own eyes, the soul continues to be deluded.

The sensory pleasures of this world, O Bharat, are akin to the drops of honey. Here, one should understand the analogy of the drop of honey.

Upon hearing such religious discourse, Pundarik, the son of Bharat, embraced asceticism. The Lord appointed him to the position of the First Ganadhar (Chief Disciple). Thereafter, bestowing upon him the "Tripadi" (three-fold aphorism)—"Uppanneiva, Vigameiva, Dhuveiva" (Arising, Ceasing, Enduring)—the Lord explained: "In this universe, countless entities come into existence, countless undergo destruction, and countless remain eternal and immutable." Subsequently, the Lord appointed 83 other Ganadharas as well. Five hundred of Bharat's sons and seven hundred of his grandsons embraced the ascetic life. Marichi and Brahmi, too, adopted the path of self-restraint. Thus, comprising ascetics led by Pundarik, Sadhvis led by Brahmi, laymen led by Bharat, and laywomen led by Sundari, the Lord's Chaturvidha Sangh (four-fold spiritual community) was established.

Thereafter, having paid homage to Lord Rishabha, Bharat returned to his palace. After reverently worshipping the Lord, he proceeded to his armory and, with deep devotion, paid homage to the Chakra-ratna. Bharat Chakravarti—whose presence was attended by numerous kings throughout the day—then followed the path indicated by the Chakra and arrived near the Magadh Shrine, where he established his military encampment. After observing the Attham penance and concluding it with Parana, Bharat ascended his chariot, entered the waters up to his navel, and released an arrow bearing his own name. Upon sighting the arrow inscribed with Bharat Chakri's name, Magadh Kumar arrived at the spot, presented gifts such as a crown and earrings, and declared, "I am your humble servant." Having thus brought Magadh under his dominion, Bharat returned to his army camp. In a similar manner, Bharat subdued Varadama—the presiding deity of the Southern Ocean, Prabhas—the lord of the Western Ocean, and Sindhu Dev. From there, he established his military camp on the southern range of the Vaitadhya Mountain. There, just as he had done previously, he propitiated the deity of Vaitadhya Mountain and approached the vicinity of the

Tamishra Cave. Having propitiated Kritamala– the deity guarding that cave– he dispatched a commander named Sushen to conquer the shores of the Southern Sindhu region. Sushen, accompanied by his troops, advanced to confront the Maleccha (tribal) chieftains– such as the Simhas and Barbaras– who inhabited the aquatic, terrestrial, and fortified regions, brought them under his command and accepting tributes and gifts from them, he returned to his master, Bharat Chakravarti.

Now, to open the entrance of the Tamishra Cave, Bharat propitiated the presiding deity with devotion; proceeding there, he opened the cave's gate with a strike of the Danda-ratna (the Jewel-Scepter). Seated upon the Hasti-ratna (the Jewel-Elephant)– with the Mani-ratna placed upon its forehead to provide illumination– Bharat Chakravarti advanced into the cave. Utilizing the Kankini-ratna, which radiated light across a span of twelve yojanas and illuminated the twelve rows of the cave, he dispelled the darkness by creating forty-nine luminous mandalas– each five hundred yojanas in diameter and spaced at intervals of one yojana– arranged in a Gomutrika pattern along the cave walls. Next, came two rivers named Unmagna and Nimagna– rivers with such peculiar properties that if a stone slab were placed into the former, it would float like a gourd, whereas if a Tumbi fruit were placed into the latter, it would sink like a stone. Across these two rivers, Bharat Chakravarti– unaccompanied by his army– crossed over a bridge constructed using the Vardhaki-ratna (the Jewel-Carpenter). Emerging from the cave, which spanned fifty yojanas in width, he conquered all the formidable enemies– including the Kiratas– who inhabited that region. Thereupon, certain Kiratas propitiated their clan goddess, invoking a torrential downpour that lasted for twelve yojanas. To shelter his army from the havoc wrought by these waters, Bharat Chakravarti positioned them upon the Charma-ratna– which spanned twelve yojanas– and unfurled a canopy of equal dimensions above them; placing the Mani-ratna atop the canopy's stick to provide light, he remained there for seven days. After the passage of seven days, a Chakra emerged from the Charma-ratna; witnessing this, the people exclaimed, "This egg has emerged from Brahma!"– and thus, a resounding proclamation spread.

Subsequently, having subdued the ruler of the small Himavant mountain, Bharat Chakravarti continued his journey. He then engaged in a twelve-year-long war against Nami and Vinami– who resided in the southern and northern ranges of the Vaitadhya Mountain– and ultimately conquered them. As a penalty, Vinami offered his daughter, named Subhadra, to Bharat. Upon the arising of a sense of detachment, installing their sons in their respective positions, Nami and Vinami received initiation from Lord Rishabhdev.

Subsequently, having pitched camp on the banks of the River Ganges– and with the Commander-in-Chief, Sushena, having secured the northern bank just as before– the Ganga Devi became enamored with Bharat. Consequently, Bharat engaged in amorous pastimes with her for a period of one thousand years. Later, while returning toward his capital city, Bharat acquired the nine treasures (Navanidhan); their names are as follows:

1. Naisarpa, 2. Panduka, 3. Pingala, 4. Sarvaratnaka, 5. Mahapadma, 6. Kal, 7. Mahakal, 8. Manavaka, 9. Shankhaka.

Each of these treasures measured twelve Yojanas in length, nine Yojanas in width, and eight Yojanas in height. Residing within them as presiding deities— corresponding to the names of the respective treasures— were gods of the Naga-kumara class, possessing a lifespan of one Palyopama. Thereafter, Bharat Chakravartin entered his capital city, Ayodhya, amidst great festivities. Following the ceremonial worship of the Chakra (the divine discus), Bharat's coronation was celebrated for a period of twelve years. His magnificent imperial splendor comprised sixty-four thousand women of the inner palace, one hundred and twenty-five thousand other women of leisure (courtesans), eighty-four hundred thousand elephants, eighty-four hundred thousand horses, eighty-four hundred thousand chariots, ninety-six hundred million foot soldiers, ninety-six hundred million villages, seventy-two thousand principal cities, three hundred and sixty-three royal cooks, eighteen guilds, and numerous merchants— such was the extent of his prosperity. Bharat Chakravartin reigned supreme over all directions for a period of sixty thousand years.

On one occasion, observing that his sister, Sundari, had become physically frail, Bharat inquired her family regarding the cause of her weakness. The family members replied, "From the very day you departed on your tour of the realm, she has been observing the Ayambil penance. Sixty thousand years have now elapsed since she began this penance." Sundari Sati undertook this penance with the specific resolve that— even though the Yugalika dharma has been abolished by the Lord— her own beauty should not become a source of attachment or delusion for her brother.

Alas! It is a great wonder that King Nabhi's dynasty is so consistently virtuous that Sundari is performing such penance as if it were a child's play.

Patient as the ocean and weakened by intense penance, Sundari, Bahubali's sister, is stronger than Bharat, who is drowning in the ocean of attachment, due to her virtue.

Bharat Chakravarti then apologized to Sundari and gave her permission. Sundari then took initiation from Lord Rishabhdev. When the Chakra Ratna was not entering the armory, Bharat asked his minister the reason. The minister said, "Your brother Bahubali did not come to serve you, therefore this Chakra Ratna is not entering the armory." Then the messenger sent by Bharat went to Bahubali and said, "Your brother Bharat has returned to his city after mastering the six regions." Bharat has pleased other kings by giving them elephants, horses, and lands. But you haven't even come to meet your brother. Come there, your brother will give you a lot of lands too. Hearing this, Bahubali said, "Who is whose brother? If I serve that brother, consider everything finished for me. This land was given to me by my father, Rishabhdev. Why does Bharat crave this land?" The messenger said, "Your brother is stronger than you in elephants, horses, chariots, and army. Therefore, if you come there, he will give you a lot of land. If you don't, he will come here and fight you and take your land. This is your opportunity to serve him, because he is powerful."

Bahubali said, "Has Bharat forgotten that when we used to play together on the bank of river Ganges, I had lifted Bharat in my arms, tossed him high into the distant sky, and then caught him again as he fell back down. In this manner, I have conquered Bharat many times in the past. And now— is this Bharat the one attempting to display his strength?" The messenger replied, "His army is now on the march— a force so immense that the very Earth, and even Sheshnag who supports it, tremble beneath its excessive weight. He has conquered the powerful Vidyadharas— Nami and Vinami— who dwell in the Vaitadhya Mountains, as well as mighty deities such as the Magadhas." Upon hearing this, Bahubali expelled the messenger, who continued to speak in this way, from the royal court. The messenger then returned to Bharat and recounted the entire sequence of events, conveying exactly what Bahubali had said. Thereupon, Bharat prepared himself and set out; as he departed, he encountered numerous bad omens, though these were subsequently followed by auspicious signs. Bharat advanced into the country of Bahli and laid siege to the city of Takshashila. At that juncture, his minister, Sumatisagar, advised him, "It is not proper to rush into battle so abruptly. You should return to camp, ensure your army is fed, and only then engage in combat." Heeding this counsel, Bharat turned back, offered worship to Lord Rishabhadeva, and partook in a meal alongside all his soldiers. Meanwhile, seated in his court, Bahubali received news of the arrival of Bharat's army; yet, his heart remained entirely devoid of fear, and he, too, set forth for battle. The conflict between Bharat and Bahubali raged for twelve long years. Neither of the two suffered defeat. Witnessing the immense slaughter of living beings, Shakendra descended to intervene, addressing them both: "It is unbecoming for you two to wage a war that results in such mass destruction of life. In the first glance battle, Bharat was defeated in the battle, while Bahubali emerged victorious. The Dev s showered Bahubali with a rain of flowers upon his head. Thus, in this and the subsequent rounds of battle, it was Bharat who suffered defeat.

It is said that in the first battle of glances, the battle of words, the battle of arms, the battle of fists, and the battle of staves, Bharat suffered defeat in every single battle.

Then, Bharat hurled his Chakra to slay Bahubali; however, the Chakra merely circumambulated Bahubali and returned to Bharat's hand. Bahubali declared, "O Bharat! I could pulverize this Chakra in an instant; but what am I to do with you? After all, you are my elder brother. I am returning this Chakra to you; do with it whatever your power allows." Thus, the Chakra, sent back by Bahubali, returned to Bharat. The minister then explained that the Chakra holds no power over individuals of the same lineage or clan. Consequently, Bharat struck Bahubali on the head with his fist, causing Bahubali to sink into the earth up to his thighs. Bahubali, too, raised his fist to strike Bharat; yet, the very moment he raised it, he reflected: "This world is utterly devoid of substance. If a brother can engage in such acts, whom, then, can I blame? Let not the fist I have raised go in vain; instead, I shall use it to perform Loch (the plucking out of hair) upon my own head." Declaring, "I shall perform the Panchmushti Loch (the five-fist plucking of hair) upon myself and thus renounce my body,"

Bahubali stood steadfast in the posture of Kayotsarg (meditative standing). Bahubali further contemplated: "My ninety-eight younger brothers have already embraced the initiation (Diksha). If I were to approach the Lord– Bhagwan Rishabhdev– without having attained Keval Gyan, I would be compelled to bow down in reverence even to my younger brothers who have already attained that Keval Gyan." Pondering thus, Bahubali maintained a vow of silence. Bharat approached him, fell at his feet, and pleaded: "O Brother! Abandon this silence and accept the kingdom once again." Begging Bahubali's forgiveness, Bharat lamented: "I am indeed an unfortunate soul, for I have caused you great distress through acts such as the slaughter of your army."

Subsequently, Bharat bestowed the kingdom upon Bahubali's son, Somayasha; acting out of a benevolent spirit, he further delighted him by granting him additional territories and villages– even more than he retained for himself. Meanwhile, a full year passed for Bahubali without taking any food or water. It was at this juncture that Lord Rishabhdev sent Brahmi and Sundari to awaken Bahubali. Upon arriving there, they said, "O Brother! Descend from the elephant." Hearing this, Bahubali paused to reflect. He realized, "A year has passed since I have been residing here without mounting on an elephant" Recognizing the deeper significance of his two sisters' words, Bahubali contemplated: "My sisters have come here to point out that I remain seated upon the elephant of pride." Thereupon, casting aside his pride, as he took a step forward to resume his journey, the complete eradication of all karmas occurred, and he attained Keval Gyan. Subsequently, he proceeded to the assembly of Lord Rishabhadeva; after circumambulating the Lord in reverence, Bahubali– a Kevali– took his seat within the assembly. It is said:

Through the practice of extremely intense asceticism, Bahubali swiftly conquered numerous external obstacles, as well as the six internal enemies: anger, pride, deceit, greed, attachment, and aversion.

May the valiant Bahubali– who swiftly defeated King Bharat in battle, conquered the "King of Delusion" (Moha-rajā) in a single instant, and stands as the sole source of the wealth of spiritual knowledge and all true prosperity– bring about the expansion of your joy.

While King Bharat– though defeated– remained puffed up with arrogance like the intoxicated frenzy of an infantry troop and considered himself the victor, Bahubali– the son of Sunanda– paid no heed to his brother, treating him as if he were an enemy rather than a sibling. With the sharp arrow of the Jin's teachings and the keen sword of spiritual wisdom to annihilate his own arrogance, he attained liberation through the power of his own virtues, much like the heroes of the past who had previously attained Keval gyan.

Approaching Bahubali– who was engaged in asceticism to attain Keval gyan, enveloped by creeping vines, and fully absorbed in his penance– Brahmi and Sundari, filled with joy by the Lord's instructions, gently helped that supreme sage to "descend"

from the very "forehead" of the elephant of pride, thereby guiding him toward the attainment of that wealth of Keval Gyan.

Taking five hundred carts full of grain to Rishabhdev, Bharat said, "O my lord! Please do me a favor by accepting this food today." Then Lord Rishabh replied, "The food of a king holding an umbrella is not acceptable to the sages. Therefore, please donate it to those devoted to the Dharma." Bharat then fed religious disciples who observed the vow of celibacy at his home. The cook then requested, "O my lord! Too many celibates come to eat, so we are unable to feed them all." Bharat then had three lines inscribed with the Kakini gemstone on the necks of those who knew the essence of knowledge, philosophy, and character, and nine lines on the necks of those who knew the Navtatva. Over time, they became Janoi wearers. Once, Bharat said, "O Lord! How many Arihants will there be like you? Then the Lord said that Ajit, Sambhav, Abhinandan, Sumati, Padmaprabh, Suparshva, Chandprabh, Suvidhi, Sheetal, Shreyansa, Vasupujya, Vimal, Anant, Dharma, Shanti, Kunthu Ara, Malli, Munisuvrata, Nami, Nemi, Parshva and Vardhaman will be twenty-three more Tirthankaras.

Bharat asked the Lord, is there anyone in this council who will be a Tirthankar like you in future. Yugadi Dev said - Your son Marichi who has adopted the character but now due to being unable to bear the rituals like taking water bath, wearing an umbrella on his head, wearing shoes etc. is out of this Parshad. Going forward, he will be the first Vasudev named Triprashtra in this Chauvishi, Chakravarti in Muka city of Mahavideh and the twenty-fourth Tirthankar named Mahavir in the same Bharat region. Then Bharat, being happy, got up early and went there and after giving three circumambulations to him, he said, "You, Vasudeva named Triprishta, will not be the Chakravarti in the city of Mooka, but you will be the twenty-fourth Tirthankara named Mahavira in this very Bharat region, and therefore I am paying my respects to you." Having said this, Bharat, after saluting Marichi and praising him, went to his city. Hearing his words, Marichi said, "Oh! My lineage is the best. Because Yugadish Rishabhdev is my grandfather, Bharat Chakravarti is my father, and I will become Vasudeva Chakravarti and the last Tirthankara named Mahavira in turn." By speaking with such pride, Marichi earned the karma of a low clan. Because -

Whoever has pride of caste, profit, family, wealth, strength, beauty, penance, and knowledge, attains inferiority in the next life." Rishabhdev's first Ganadhar named Pundarik attained salvation on Chaitra Sud Purnima at Vimalgiri along with five crore Munis. Bharat came there and got golden statues of Rishabhdev and Pundarik Ganadhar made according to their bodies and got a big temple constructed on Shatrunjaya mountain with the statues of Rishabhdev and Pundarik Swami. Shri Rishabhdev Prabhu visited Shatrunjaya many times.

It is said that the first Tirthankara Rishabhdev, while roaming with the gods, visited Shatrunjaya Tirtha for ninety-nine years. After establishing the Chaturvidha Shri Sangh twenty lakh years ago in the Kumar stage, held the position of a king for sixty-

three lakh years ago and followed the life of a saint for one lakh years ago, whose entire life's deeds have been exhausted, knowing about his own Nirvana Kalyanak, he accepted Ansan by observing six fasts on the Ashtapad mountain along with ten thousand saints. Due to the shaking of his seat, on the arrival of sixty-four Indras and Bharat Chakravarti like Saudharmendra, when three years and eight and a half months remained in the third Ara of this Avasarpini era, on the thirteenth day of the dark half of the month of Magha (Magha Krishna Teras), in the Abhijit nakshatra, Shri Rishabhdev, seated in the Paryankasana posture, attained the complete destruction of his Bhavopagrahi karmas; having thus fulfilled his entire lifespan, he embraced the sublime liberation situated at the apex of the universe (Lok). At that same time, other ascetics also attained salvation (Moksha) through the complete eradication of their eight types of karmas. The Dev s (Devas) constructed funeral pyres: in the east a triangular pyre for the Lord, and quadrangular pyres in the west for the remaining ascetics. Following the cremation rites, the sacred ashes were reverently worshipped by both the Devatas and Narendras. It was at this site that Brahmacharis (celibates) ritually acquired the "Three Fires"— sacred flames that continue to be worshipped in the households of Brahmins to this very day. After the Dev s had returned to their respective abodes, Emperor Bharat commissioned the construction of a lion-shaped temple at the sacred site of Lord Shri Rishabhdev's Nirvana. Within this temple, he installed statues of the twenty-four Tirthankaras— sculpted to a height proportionate to the actual stature of each respective Tirthankara— arranging them as follows: four statues in the south, eight in the west, ten in the north, and two in the east. To safeguard this holy pilgrimage site (Tirtha), he utilized his Dandaratra to level the peaks and constructed stairs measuring one Yojan in length. Having performed acts of worship, hymns of praise, and other devotional rites at this place, Bharat returned to his capital city, Ayodhya.

On one occasion, while residing within his inner chambers (Antahpur)— his body adorned with a full array of magnificent jewelry— Emperor Bharat was presented by a royal attendant with a full-length mirror capable of reflecting his entire physique. As he gazed into the mirror, admiring his body resplendent with ornaments, a ring suddenly slipped from one of his fingers and fell to the ground. Observing that the hand now appeared devoid of beauty without the ring, he proceeded to remove all other ornaments from his body— including his crown, earrings, and various jewels. At that moment, beholding his entire body stripped of its former splendor— resembling nothing more than a lifeless ember— he began to engage in deep spiritual contemplation (Bhavana). As he immersed himself in meditating upon the Anitya Bhavana (the contemplation of impermanence) and other such spiritual reflections, he attained Keval Gyan.

Through the act of beholding the reflection of his own form in the mirror-like gem, Bharat Chakravarti attained complete enlightenment. Through this, illuminated by the light of ultimate truth, he perceived his own pure soul as being identical in nature to the Supreme Soul.

Bharat Chakravarti— who had embraced asceticism alongside ten thousand kings— wandered with them in spiritual pursuit for a period of one hundred thousand Purva years; thereafter, having awakened the souls of worthy beings, he undertook a one-month Ansan (fast unto death) on Mount Ashtapada and attained liberation. Bharat's son, Suryayasha, was personally consecrated as king by Shakrendra. Upon the complete eradication of his karmas, Bahubali attained Moksha (liberation). Brahmi and Sundari, too, attained Moksha. The glory of their attainment of Nirvana was celebrated by the gods.



2. Abhay Kumar

Endowed with the intellect of Autpatiki (spontaneous, intuitive wisdom), Abhay Kumar— the foremost among ministers— attained the wealth of pure self-restraint and subsequently attained liberation. Therefore, the account of Abhay Kumar's origin, his true nature, and his ultimate journey toward liberation is narrated as follows:

Situated in the southern direction of Jambudvipa— an island spanning a hundred thousand yojanas— and located within the central region of Bharat Kshetra, the Magadh country shines forth in all its glory. Within this realm, the city known as Rajgrih— measuring twelve yojanas in length and nine yojanas in width, and abounding with various gems, pearls, corals, and other precious treasures— appears resplendent beyond measure. To its immediate south flows the sacred River Ganges. Within this region stands a mountain known as Vaibhargiri. Who would not be filled with joy upon beholding the towering mansions of the many Shresthis and the magnificent Jin temples within the city of Rajgrih? Indeed, such sights would delight the hearts of all. There, King Prasenajit reigned— a monarch who was like a lion in his prowess to vanquish mighty enemies (likened to elephants), and like the moon in his ability to cause the ocean of justice to swell with vitality. Encircling the city like a coiled serpent standing guard, a towering fortress stood as a magnificent bulwark, ensuring the protection of the entire city. That King had a hundred queens, the foremost among whom was Kalavati; he also had a hundred sons, including Shrenik. The King personally imparted the arts of both weaponry (Shastra) and scripture (Shastra) to all his sons. Because it has been said:

"He who fails to acquire knowledge in the first stage of life, wealth in the second, and righteousness in the third— what, then, shall he accomplish in the fourth stage?"

"In this world, every individual must invariably master two essential arts: first, the art of living a life of happiness; and second, the art of attaining a noble destiny (Sadgati) in the life hereafter."

One day, the King reflected within his mind: "All these sons of mine are equal in knowledge and strength. Therefore, without testing, a son worthy of the throne will not be identified. Only the son who is endowed with wisdom and a humble heart, beloved by the people, is worthy of the throne. Therefore, testing them is necessary because:

If the father, while alive, does not test his sons and establish them with dignity in the kingdom, then after the father's death, the sons fight among themselves and die, and someone else takes over the kingdom. For it is said that:

When the body is destroyed, where is wisdom, where is memory without wisdom, where is knowledge for the one without memory, and how can a person devoid of knowledge attain salvation?

Thinking this, the king had delicious dishes and Ghevar prepared, filled in bamboo baskets, and placed them in a basement. He also had new pots filled with water placed there. Then, leaving all the sons in the basement, the king said, "O sons! You should fill your stomach without opening the cover of the bamboo baskets and water pitchers. Use your intelligence to eat the dishes kept inside the baskets and drink water from the pots without opening them. Shrenik and other sons started thinking with their own intelligence as to how to overcome this difficulty and how to keep their father's orders intact. No one could develop any wisdom. Then seeing all the brothers suffering from hunger, Shrenik Kumar said that if you all do as per my advice then your hunger pangs will be satisfied. All the brothers said that whatever satisfies us would be the best. Shrenik took clean clothes and wrapped them around all the water pitchers and by shaking the pots, crushed the dishes into powder. He fed the powder dropped from the basket and squeezing the cloths wrapped around new earthen pots and offering the water thus extracted, he quenched the hunger and thirst of all the princes. The princes then approached the King. When the King asked how they had all managed to satisfy their hunger, one of the sons replied, "Through Shrenik's ingenuity." The King then remarked, "The one who possessed the wit to pulverize cooked delicacies is nothing but a pauper!" Subsequently, King Prasenjit had kheer (sweet rice pudding) prepared; placing vessels filled with the pudding before all his sons, he immediately unleashed a pack of hungry dogs. Just as the princes began to eat the kheer, the barking dogs rushed toward their vessels to snatch the food. Terrified— and with their hands still soiled from eating— all the princes, except Shrenik, abandoned their vessels and fled in various directions. Shrenik, however, remained fearless; he placed his brothers' abandoned vessels before the dogs. As the dogs ate the kheer from the soiled vessels— wagging their tails all the while— they appeared to become as submissive as the prince's own servants. Thereafter, Shrenik— maintaining his composure— ate the kheer remaining in his own vessel; having satisfied his hunger and washed his hands, he went to the King. The other princes also returned to the King. Observing that Shrenik was fully satiated while the others' faces were parched with hunger, the King feigned anger and declared, "Since he ate in the same row as the dogs, he has become a dog . He is like a rustic villager or a lowly herdsman; that is why he ate in such a manner.

For it is said that whoever eats in the same row as another is deemed by the people to be of the same nature as that companion. Yet, all these other princes are noble, pure, and holy." At these words, the other princes rejoiced; however, Shrenik felt not even the slightest pang of regret. King Prasenjit then addressed Shrenik, saying, "I have already put you to the test once. Now, go into that burning white palace and bring out whatever you deem most valuable." Disregarding the diamonds, gems, and pearls, Shrenik instead retrieved a musical instrument known as a Bhambha from the burning structure. The King then remarked, "Take Bhambha with you, go to every household, and declare: I am a glutton! Whatever items other princes discard, you consume them. If you conduct yourself in this manner— and only then— know that you are truly capable, and your command shall reign supreme!" In this way, through a clever play on words, the father bestowed the kingdom upon Shrenik. The King subsequently allotted various regions and villages to all his sons, distributing them according to their respective merits. While the other sons busied themselves amassing elephants, horses, chariots, and armies, Shrenik gathered none of these; instead, he was seen sharing rice pudding with dogs, pilfering delicacies, and— when a house caught fire— saving nothing but Bhambha. Consequently, it was declared that he was unfit to rule— a miserly figure, much like a merchant, who refused to spend a single penny. Upon hearing his father's pronouncement, Shrenik— alone and with a sword slung over his shoulder— departed that night toward a foreign land. Shrenik was well-versed in the application of medicinal remedies, mantras, and tantric arts. Skilled in the mastery of thirty-six different martial weapons, and destined for a destiny of extraordinary deeds, Shrenik strode through the forest with the fearlessness of a lion. With a joyful heart, Shrenik wandered extensively across the land until he came upon a magnificent mountain known as Vajrakar. The presiding deity of Mount Vajrakar, looking the immense fortune that awaited Prince Shrenik, appeared to him in a dream— employing a subtle illusion— and spoke thus: "O Prince! Two miles from here, along the banks of the Sur River, stand two Peepal trees; their branches are vast, and they grow so close together that their limbs appear to embrace one another. Nestled within the branches between these two trees lies a large white stone— a stone whose virtues rival those of the mythical Mount Meru itself. Embedded within it are eighteen precious gems, each possessing a power greater than the last." Among them:

1. The first gem enables one to bring people of eighteen different castes under one's command.
2. The second gem serves as an antidote, neutralizing all manner of poisons.
3. The third gem commands the respect from kings, ministers, Shresthis, and other dignitaries.
4. The fourth gem bestows progeny endowed with extraordinary powers.
5. The fifth gem grants the enjoyment of divine pleasures.
6. The sixth gem enables one to swim even in water flowing with great velocity.

7. The seventh gem awakens wisdom and discernment.
8. The eighth gem wards off petty afflictions and disturbances.
9. The ninth gem renders the body impervious to wounds.
10. The tenth gem grants knowledge and learning without the need for formal study.
11. The eleventh gem ensures immunity from capture by hostile armies.
12. The twelfth gem restores sight, enabling even those blind from birth to see.
13. The thirteenth gem protects the body from being consumed by fire.
14. The fourteenth gem grants mastery in the discernment and evaluation of objects.
15. The fifteenth gem eliminates the sensations of hunger and thirst.
16. The sixteenth gem protects travellers on their journey, ensuring they do not encounter ferocious beasts such as tigers or lions.
17. The seventeenth gem enables the transformation of one's physical appearance.
18. The eighteenth gem cures the body of all ailments and commands the reverence of all people.

"You are a capable man; observe this stone carefully, acquire these eighteen gems, inscribe your name upon them, and keep them in your possession. Worship these gems with devotion and hold my name constantly in your thoughts. By the time you reach your destination and seek rest in the shade, this stone will vanish and ascend back into the sky. Regard every effect and power I have ascribed to these gems as absolute truth. I have revealed this to you because I foresee your fortune rising and flourishing. These gems will exert a profound influence for a period of twenty years; thereafter, their power will continue to grow and intensify." Upon seeing this dream, the young prince awoke to find that morning had already dawned. Reciting Three hundred Panch Parmeshthi Namaskar Mahamantra and contemplating the nature of his dream within his heart, the Prince proceeded on his way. Proceeding in accordance with the instructions of the Dev , Prince Shrenik moved forward until he reached the riverbank, where he beheld two trees whose branches intertwined as if in a handshake; situated between them was a large white stone, which Shrenik duly worshipped. Thereafter, as he sat resting to one side, a stone fell from between the two trees, which Shrenik caught in his hands. Identifying all the stones by the unique characteristics indicative of their gem-like nature, he slowly continued his journey forward. Because—

One should recognize that a good kingdom, wealth, worldly pleasures, birth into a noble lineage, physical beauty, wisdom, longevity, and good health— all these are the fruits of Dharma (righteous conduct).

Once, while traveling along the path, Shrenik observed on the riverbank trees of Champak, Ashoka, Punnaga, Makanda, and Rayana, all laden with an abundance of

fruits and flowers. Eating the sweet fruits from those trees deemed to be of the finest quality, frolicking with deer and other creatures, and quenching his thirst from the pristine currents of the river, he continued his journey. At night, Shrenik would rest upon a bed fashioned from soft, tender leaves. He was filled with immense delight as he gazed upon the waterfalls cascading down the mountain peaks and watched the dancing peacocks. As he traversed the forest, he felt a sense of bliss that surpassed even the comforts of dwelling in royal palaces. While Shrenik wandered alone through the woods, a young Bhil maiden came into his view. Upon seeing Shrenik approaching— radiant as a celestial prince— the Bhil maiden was overcome with ecstasy; her anklets chimed, filling the air with their melody, and her feet and body were adorned with the resplendent feathers of peacocks. With her heart's deepest desires now fulfilled, she advanced slowly and gracefully— moving with the majestic gait of an elephant— rejoicing just as the Chakor bird rejoices upon beholding the moon. Descending from the mountain peak, the young Bhil maiden approached Shrenik and spoke these words: "My life has truly been fulfilled since I have found a youthful and handsome suitor like you, I have come seeking your refuge, O Master! Please show me grace and stay. My father is the King of this settlement; if you marry me, my father will make you the King of this land. However, if you do not heed my words, you shall meet with a premature death. I possess knowledge of all manner of medicinal herbs, gems, and the powers of mantras and incantations. I possess a specific herb capable of transforming a human into an animal, and an animal back into a human. With another herb, a man can be turned into a monkey, leaping and bounding as he moves. Yet another herb can transform a monkey back into a human. Stepping lightly upon the treetops, I am capable of severing the hands and feet of men who approach me with lustful intent. I fear neither tigers nor lions; I walk through the depths of the forest without fear, nor do I fear ghosts, spirits, or demons. I fear neither thieves nor serpents, for I possess the means to protect myself. I do not fear the rushing currents of water; I can even seize an elephant by the ear and hold it motionless. The only thing from which I flee is fire. Knowing all this, accept my hand in marriage and become my husband. The borders of my father's kingdom extend across a hundred yojanas. Therefore, how can you possibly depart from my presence without marrying me? Just as a guest is welcomed— whether with smiles or with tears— so too must you, by whatever means necessary, accept me as your wife." Prince Shrenik reflected: "She is the daughter of a Bhil chieftain; how could I possibly marry her? She is unrefined, of a lowly caste, and— driven by the impulses of desire— she is both formidable and cunning. I was previously exiled from my own kingdom by my father for the transgression of dining alongside dogs. If I become her husband, it would be akin to sprinkling salt upon the head of my lineage (a disgrace to the honor of my caste). For a man of noble birth to venture into places frequented only by the base and ignoble inevitably brings ruin upon his clan. If I were to enter into wedlock with her, the entire Kshatriya lineage will become like the Bhil clan, I will have to eat from her hands, and salute her father. If I marry her, my parents will be disgraced. Shrenik thought, "I will not marry this woman under any circumstances. I should

either flee from her or accept death. Because those who, despite being from a noble family, befriend lowly men, should also be considered lowly."

Fate has prepared a trap in the form of women in this world. Knowingly, creatures fall into this trap, while unknowingly, they do not.

Falsehood, courage, illusion, foolishness, excessive greed, lack of affection, and cruelty are inherent flaws in women.

Seeing them seduces the mind, touching them seizes the strength, and intercourse seduces the semen. Thus, women are demons in themselves.

After observing silence for a moment, when Shrenik left from that place, she also followed him. While walking, Shrenik saw the burning forest fire and remembering the Agnistambhan gem in his heart, entered the fire. Jumping into the fire, Shrenik said to her - O Bhil daughter! If you want to marry me, then come here to me. Hearing this, rubbing both the hands, the Bhil daughter said, I have acted too hastily, if I had been calm, he would have surely married me slowly. I was deceived by this cunning man. If I had been more polite to him, would not have said even a few words that created fear. If I had spoken sweet words becoming his maid, he surely would have fallen into my trap. But the words I actually uttered rebounded upon my own head, for he was versed in countless mantras and occult arts. Yet, how can a gem remain in the hands of a pauper? In my folly, I foolishly revealed my knowledge of mantras and sorcery to him. Consequently, he deceived me and escaped into the raging fire. 'What shall I do? Where shall I go? To whom can I turn?'— lamenting thus, the Bhil maiden, seated high above, watched the Prince depart; overwhelmed with remorse, she began to beat her chest in despair. In a moment, however, she reflected that neither the departing nor the dying can be saved by anyone. 'I am grieving in vain. Without the favor of destiny, even a wish-fulfilling gem will not remain within one's home.' Pondering thus, she remained standing right there. The Prince clenched his fists and ran; exerting all his strength, he eventually reached the banks of the River Ganges. Gazing upon the vast expanse of water, the Prince repeatedly scanned the four directions, searching for a way to swim across. Suddenly, spotting a dried-up sandalwood tree on the riverbank, he was filled with joy and climbed upon it. As he ascended, the tree— with a loud cracking sound resembling the trumpeting of an elephant— toppled into the water. Then, by mentally invoking the Jaltarak (Water-Crossing) Gem, the Prince— seated upon the floating, withered tree— appeared as magnificent as one seated within a celestial chariot in flight. Sustained by the support of the sandalwood tree and the miraculous power of the gem, the Prince, after twenty days, arrived near the city of Bennatat.

When the Prince brought his tree-turned-chariot to rest there, the fragrance of that tree permeated every corner of the city. Just as bumblebees are drawn to fragrant blossoms, so too did numerous Shreshthis flock to the spot, lured by the scent. The Shreshthis inquired, 'O Sarthvah! What is the price of this sandalwood?' The Prince replied, 'I am unable to state its true value.'

This is sold just like a precious gem or ruby. No king possesses sandalwood of such quality in his treasury; therefore, I shall sell this dried sandalwood to you, weighed ounce for ounce against gold. You, too, must surely offer me gold in exchange, for a commodity of such excellence is invariably bought up in its entirety. Meanwhile, as a large crowd gathered, the Shreshthis stepped forward and declared: "O people! Stand back! Do not assume that this man is alone and without support; we are all his brethren in faith. If even a small portion of his sandalwood is taken, consider it as if it were taken from us; therefore, do not lay a hand upon his merchandise. Anyone who attempts to touch his goods shall be punished as a thief, for the King is duty-bound to suppress the unjust and protect the just." Subsequently, tools such as saws, axes, and spade were brought from all directions to cut the sandalwood; every part of the tree—its branches, roots, and trunk— was sold at a price equivalent to its weight in gold. The young Prince placed the entire sandalwood tree upon the scales and sold it for its weight in gold. Thereafter, the Prince accepted precious gems in exchange for the gold he had received. Within a mere moment, having acquired the sandalwood in exchange for their gold, the Shreshthis departed for their respective homes, filled with joy.

Subsequently, Prince Shrenik tied his gems securely in a bundle, changed his attire to disguise himself, and entered the city of Bennatat. As he walked through the rows of shops, Prince Shrenik first entered the establishment of a merchant named Dhanavah. During the brief moment the Prince sat there, the merchant experienced a sudden surge in business and reaped a substantial profit. Consequently, the merchant said to the Prince: "In this vessel lies Madanphal; in the second, the bark of the Rohini tree; and in the third, barley— all of which I procured just yesterday. Guduchi, Kacchurak, Patala, and similar herbs are contained in the fourth vessel. Trigadu, Triphala, Saindhava salt, Girimallika, and other ingredients are found here; and as for the dried ginger— that prime commodity which catches your eye— please take it." Upon hearing this, the Prince replied: "O Shreshthi! You are very generous. Why do you show me such favor? Or is this simply your innate nature?" Then the shopkeeper (Shreshthi) laughed and said, "To people, any individual is dear only insofar as they serve one's own self-interest; they are not cherished for the sake of another's needs." Shrenik then asked, "What is your own self-interest in this matter?" The Shreshthi replied, "Last night, a Dev appeared to me in a dream and revealed that a young man of twenty years, clad in white garments, would arrive from the east this morning. He foretold that, after the passage of seven ghadis (units of time), this young man would appear before my shop during the eighth ghadi and resolve all my misfortunes. Having shown me this vision, the Dev vanished as swiftly as a flash of lightning. Upon rising this morning, I reflected that this was indeed an auspicious dream; for, according to the science of dreams, whatever is spoken in a dream by Devs, Brahmins, cows, parents, ascetics, or kings invariably comes to pass.

With the exceptions of cows, horses, elephants, and deities, all black objects seen in a dream are deemed inauspicious; conversely— barring cotton, buttermilk, and salt— all white objects are considered auspicious.

It is said that singing in a dream leads to weeping in reality; dancing leads to imprisonment or bondage; laughing leads to sorrow; and studying leads to discord."

"Thus, when I arrived at my shop and took my seat, I beheld you— a figure possessing precisely those very characteristics." The Prince thought to himself, "This Shreshthi is a simple, guileless soul; he conceals nothing." As the Shreshthi continued to recount the details of his dream, a sense of growing astonishment filled the Prince's mind. Glancing at the goods within the shop, the Prince asked, "What is that object stored down in the cellar?" The Shreshthi replied, "Out in the open sea, a ship drifting in from a distant island was intercepted by pirates. Laden with a multitude of goods, that vessel was swiftly brought here by those pirates and given to me in exchange for a vast sum of wealth."

After the thieves had departed, the King, upon learning of this entire incident, confiscated all my wealth— including grain, clothing, gold, and silver— as a punitive fine. He stripped me of my title as 'Shreshthi' and seized all the cargo that remained on the ship. Furthermore, the King issued an order: "Give him only the dust visible on this ship; let him have nothing else, so that from this day forward, this Shreshthi may never again engage in such thievery." Having confiscated all my assets, the King reduced a Shreshthi of my stature to such a state of destitution. Now, were I to discard even this dust, people would mock me; therefore, I resolved to keep it. I reasoned that during the rainy season, the area in front of the shops turns muddy; thus, I have preserved this soil— some placed outside the shop and some inside. As for the ship I had purchased, within five to seven days, it too drifted away with the currents of the Ganges River and vanished from sight. Though I still bore the name 'Dhan' (Wealth), I had become utterly destitute. At this point, Shrenik remarked, "Alas! How can one who does not understand the true nature and value of commodities ever hope to succeed in trade and commerce?" Shreshthi replied, "People already mock me; if you, too, join in their laughter, what will become of me? Everyone in the city knows exactly why I am lingering here; indeed, they are all eyeing my magnificent home and my splendid shop, planning to purchase them. I intend to sell my house and leave this city forever. In the past, while living in this city, I enjoyed a lavish lifestyle— dining on a variety of delectable foods and adorning myself in divine garments; yet now, I subsist merely on whatever meager food and clothing I can somehow manage to acquire. I am at a loss as to what to do— should I jump into a well to perish, or should I throw myself into a fire and be reduced to ashes? Without wealth, a man possesses no dignity." As it has been said:

To dwell in a dense forest— overgrown with thorns, devoid of human company, and prowled by packs of tigers; to sleep upon a bed of grass; and to clothe oneself in garments made from the leaves of trees is noble, yet it is not fitting for a poor man to dwell amidst his own kinsmen.

Shrenik Kumar, an ocean of compassion, was deeply saddened to see the Shreshthi in such distress. For—

'1. Soft heart, 2. Sweet speech, 3. Bright eyes with happiness, 4. Power with forgiveness, 5. Sinless intellect, 6. Lakshmi who removes the poverty of the poor, 7. Beauty with modesty, 8. Knowledge without pride and 9. Ownership without ego, these nine are clearly called the best pools of nectar.

Kumar spoke:

"O Shreshthi! Why is it that, despite possessing wealth, you are contemplating the embrace of death?"

The Shreshthi replied, "Even so, why do you speak in this manner? There is not even a grain of food left in my home to eat!" Then Kumar said: "Carefully guard the vessel that lies by the banks of the Ganges, and take possession of the soil you see within it. All the soil contained therein is worthy of your protection, for it will yield immense wealth. Until the wealth derived from that soil arrives at your home, conduct your trade using my precious gems. Seek the favor of the King of Bennatat City, and take back into your service all those who were once your attendants. Continue to trade with these gems until I return from my travels to other countries." Then Dhanapati (the Shreshthi) asked, "Why have you spoken thus? These words have stirred a profound anxiety within my heart. The mention of your departure fills my soul with sorrow. Why do you now cast away— just as I was about to board it— the ship of your counsel, which you had offered to help me navigate this ocean of adversity? It does not befit noble souls to speak in such a manner. Fulfill the promises you have made to me; only then, if it is your desire, may you depart for other countries. If you disregard my words and leave, even the pronouncements made by the gods will prove futile. Without the aid of your ingenuity and stratagems, I shall get mere soil in return to the soil. Why do you come here like a Kalpavriksha (wish-fulfilling tree), only to depart? Sell this dust before you go; whatever wealth is earned from the sale; we shall divide equally between the two of us. If you refuse to do this, I shall jump into the River Ganges, seeking an end to my misery." The young man replied, "Very well. If you refrain from inquiring about my father's name, lineage, place of residence, or village, then I shall consent to stay here for a few days." Dhanapati agreed, saying, "I shall ask you nothing— neither your name nor any other detail. You may reign here with full authority. This merchandise belongs to me, but the intellect to sell it is yours; utilize your wisdom to sell these goods, and we shall divide the proceeds equally between us." Subsequently, Dhanapati's daughter brought a twig for cleaning teeth (datun) along with water. Breaking the twig into two parts, both Dhanapati and Shrenik cleansed their mouths, and in doing so, a bond of mutual affection grew between them. The merchant then accepted the gems offered by the young man. The maiden who had brought the twig and water was Dhanapati's unmarried daughter. When the young man, having finished his ablutions, took his seat at the shop, the maiden observed his auspicious attributes. She thought to herself, "If this man were to become my husband, it would signify the fruition of countless good deeds performed in my past lives." Harboring this thought, she approached her father and said, "Father! If you intend to arrange my marriage, then let this young man be my husband; otherwise, I

shall renounce the world and embrace the ascetic life." Dhanapati Shreshthi replied, "Daughter! It is not proper for you to speak in such a manner. Go home at once and clean the home! A guest has arrived to us from a distant land." Thereupon, Dhanapati's daughter returned home, approached her mother, and said, "A man has arrived at our shop from a distant land; beholding him has filled my heart with joy. The wealth that has been kept for my future, Mother! use that wealth to prepare a sumptuous meal for this guest. Keep aside all lethargy, and by honoring him with a bath, a meal, and other courtesies arrange for my marriage to him." The mother replied, "O shameless daughter! Why did you go to the shop without permission? If you intend to marry every man you merely lay eyes upon, then you are truly lost to us. Any child who speaks only as per their own whims is destined for misery. Born into a noble lineage as you are, why do you speak in such a manner? Where has your sense of modesty gone?" The daughter responded, "Mother, do not speak to me in such a tone. Know that my virtue is as unshakable as Mount Meru; harbor no impure thoughts in your mind. I am, after all, your own daughter. However, let the man I have chosen be my husband in this life; otherwise, the path of asceticism shall be my only refuge." As the mother and daughter conversed in this manner while preparing the meal, that guest arrived in the courtyard. Meanwhile, having overheard the conversation between his wife and daughter, Dhan Shreshthi entered the house and said to his wife, "This excellent groom has arrived here, and our daughter, too, is of marriageable age. If these two are united in marriage, their union will shine with a splendor akin to that of the Moon and Rohini, the Sun and Ratnadevi, Kamadev and Rati, Krishna and Radha, or Shakrendra and Indrani. Provided no obstacles arise, the union of these two shall be truly the best. For living beings, many impediments often arise— both in the pursuit of wealth and in the performance of meritorious deeds."

Because:

Those who strive to expand their spiritual merit frequently encounter manifest obstacles; therefore, virtuous individuals must always act with courage.

Do not question this man regarding his village, name, lineage, or clan; for he has bound me by a solemn vow not to inquire into such matters. Therefore, he has arrived here at our home.

Then Sunanda said: "O Father! Do not inquire into his name, place of origin, lineage, or clan; rather, if this young man accepts me, then arrange my marriage to him; otherwise, arrange initiation for me!" Upon realizing his daughter's firm resolve, her father was delighted. Thereafter, the daughter of the Dhan Shreshthi served them with great devotion— assisting with their ritual baths, acts of charity, worship of the deities, and the serving of their meal— until finally, the two of them seated themselves in the drawing room. Dhan Shreshthi said: "If you would not feel bad, I have something to say." Shrenik replied, "Speak whatever pleases me." Then Dhan Shreshthi said: "O Traveler! This is my daughter; please accept her hand in marriage. Do not harbor any

greed for wealth in your heart; I am not one to keep a son-in-law dependent upon me for ten or twenty days. Those who sell their daughters incur a grave sin." Because—

"Those who sell their daughters in such a manner are destined to suffer an unending chain of intense misery, both in this world and in the world hereafter.

This daughter has already accepted you as her husband in her heart; if you do not accept her, she will embrace the ascetic path. She desires no other man." Hearing this, and recognizing her as a woman of righteous character, the young man said: "This girl is foolish! If she were to marry every suitor she merely lays eyes upon, she would surely be counted among the ranks of fools. If she proposes marriage to a groom without first knowing his name, place of origin, lineage, or clan, then undoubtedly she is a fool." Then, the maiden retorted: "Let him say whatever he pleases; I shall marry him and no other! Does anyone ever need to inquire into the lineage of a Rajhansa (royal swan)? Just as the lineage of a royal swan is inherently noble, so too is the lineage and true stature of noble men revealed simply through their speech and demeanor." Upon hearing this, the young man reflected to himself: "Just as a female royal swan finds delight only in the waters of Lake Manasarovar and nowhere else, so too does this girl find her heart's desire solely in me." Then the Prince spoke openly, saying, "I am a native of a foreign land. If I were to accept you, what benefit would accrue to me? I might remain here for but a moment, only to depart the very next. My union with you would be fleeting, like the shadow of a cloud." To this, Sunanda replied, "Your words are indeed true; for the Moon and the Sun rely upon the clouds, the rains depend upon the clouds, all the stars find their basis in the clouds, and all mankind relies upon the clouds— just so, do I rely upon you. Please, in your kindness, accept my hand in marriage and, like the clouds, bring forth an abundance of progeny— sons, grandsons, etc." The Prince responded, "Our union would be akin to a dream. Once fifteen days have passed following our marriage, I— being a foreigner— shall return to my own land. For it is the nature of foreigners and ascetics to simply depart; yet, if a man who has entered into wedlock were to simply leave in such a manner, what would become of the bride?" Sunanda spoke again: "I had, in fact, already resolved to embrace the ascetic life; yet, upon beholding you, my heart has undergone this transformation. Now, either your hands shall rest upon mine, or the hand of the goddess of self-restraint. If you choose to marry me and then depart, I shall faithfully observe the vows of chastity and virtue; conversely, if you choose not to marry me, I shall attain the state of flawless, unblemished self-restraint. Marry me, then explore foreign lands and return to rule over your own kingdom." Hearing this, the Prince— having made a firm resolve— declared, "The auspicious moment has arrived; do whatever you deem best." Thereupon, the the Shreshthi celebrated with great festivity and solemnized the marriage of his daughter to Shrenik.

One day, while Shrenik was seated at the shop, he heard the sound of a drum. Shrenik then asked to Shreshthi, "O Shreshthi, why is this drum being beaten?" The merchant replied, "Devanandi Sarthavah has arrived here with one lakh and twenty-five thousand oxen, laden with a vast array of diverse goods. He possesses a parrot— a bird

that speaks only once every six months. He speaks the absolute truth regarding whatever he is asked. Once, Devanandi Sarthavah asked the parrot, "Where are the Tejanturi?" The parrot replied, "At present, all the Tejanturi are located in the city of Bennatat." Consequently, this Sarthavah arrived here, accompanied by one lakh and twenty-five thousand bullock carts laden with a multitude of goods. He met with the King and presented him with magnificent gifts. The King then inquired, "For what purpose have you come?" He replied, "I seek the Tejanturi." Thereupon, the King summoned his ministers and asked, "Who possesses the Tejanturi?" The ministers responded, "We do not know who holds them." The King then declared, "That alone is a truly noble city— one where every conceivable commodity is available, and where wealthy merchants frequently arrive to reside. How can a settlement be deemed a 'city' if its inhabitants fail to purchase the goods brought to it, or if it lacks the availability of all types of commodities?" Observing the King express his distress through such words, the ministers suggested, "Let the royal drum be beaten; our city is vast, and it is possible that the Tejanturi may be found within someone's home." Acting upon this suggestion, and under the King's command, the ministers had the drum beaten. Upon hearing the Shreshthi's words, Shrenik said: "O Shreshthi! You touch the royal drum." When he touched the drum in accordance with Shrenik's words, the King's attendants went to the King and said, "The Shreshthi has struck the royal drum!" At this news, the King and all the assembled courtiers burst into laughter, remarking, "His household is now filled with nothing but dust; all his other wealth has long since vanished. He must have either lost his wits or be living in a delusional dream world to have dared to touch the royal drum." They further reasoned, "If he were to present mere dust to the Sarthavah, the prestige and glory of our city would be utterly tarnished." Consequently, the King dispatched his attendants to summon the Shreshthi. Upon seeing the King's attendants approaching to summon him, the Shreshthi turned to Shrenik and said, "Now what should be done! The King's servants had arrived. Shrenik spoke, "You need not feel distressed. Tie this gem— which holds the power to bring a king under one's sway— around your waist; then, while meditating upon the deity presiding over it, go and meet the King." "When the King becomes pleased through the influence of this gem, if you offer him a substantial sum of wealth to secure the position of Shreshthi (Chief Merchant), that very position will also grant you the Tejanturi." Accordingly, when Dhan Shreshthi, bearing the gem, met the King and paid his obeisance, the King accepted the gems with delight. He then instructed his ministers, "Let the position of Mandavi (Chief of the Marketplace) be bestowed upon this man through your hands. Even if others offer a greater sum of wealth than he has, do not grant the Mandavi position to anyone but him." Once the Shreshthi formally assumed the position of Mandavi, the King declared, "O Shreshthi! Whatever object this Sarthavah desires, you must procure it for him." The Shreshthi inquired, "Does this Sarthavah desire the old Tejanturi or the new one?" Hearing this, the King was greatly pleased; he honored Dhan Shreshthi with divine garments and other gifts, and then sent him forth accompanied by the Sarthavah. When the Sarthavah placed a golden citron (Bijora) as a ceremonial offering before the Shreshthi, the Shreshthi

said, "Place this offering before Prince Shrenik instead, for he is the one who possesses true knowledge of all things." Having presented his gifts to both of them, the Sarthavah exclaimed, "Ah! Blessed is Dhan Shreshthi, who, despite possessing such immense wealth and status, conducts himself with such humility! Blessed, too, is the land that is home to merchants of such caliber!" Upon beholding Shrenik, the Sarthavah then remarked, "Ah, Prince! I have seen you before, in the city of Rajgrih." The Prince retorted, "May the 'King's House'— that is to say, the King's prison— never be the fate of even my bitterest enemies! If you persist in uttering such inauspicious words, then go and seek your desired objects at the homes of others; there are plenty of others who will come forward to accept our materials." Perceiving that Shrenik was angry, the Sarthavah immediately rose, prostrated himself at the Prince's feet, and pleaded, "I was a fool to have uttered such words; please, forgive me." The Prince then replied, "If a quantity of Tejanturi equal to the weight of Gadyanak is placed into a blazing fire, and twenty tolas of copper is added to it, the entire mixture transforms into gold." Upon hearing this, the Sarthavah, filled with delight, performed a ritual to ward off the evil eye from Shrenik; he then requested, "Show me a sample of this Tejanturi." The Dhan Shreshthi thereupon presented the sample. Gazing upon the Tejanturi, the Sarthavah reflected: "Blessed is this merchant! For despite possessing such immense wealth within his home, he remains endowed with virtues such as generosity and courtesy. Blessed, too, is this city; and blessed is its King, in whose realm reside merchants of such caliber." Subsequently, Devanandi Sarthavah arrived at the courtyard of Dhan Shreshthi's home, bringing with him a convoy of one lakh and twenty-five thousand bullock carts laden with precious gems, gold, silver, multicolored fabrics, sandalwood, camphor, musk, and Javadi— a host of invaluable commodities. Both Dhan Shreshthi and Shrenik were struck with astonishment upon beholding the bullock carts overflowing with such treasures! Thereafter, having mutually inspected the goods, they proceeded to exchange them with one another. Both parties were mutually pleased with the outcome of their transaction. Subsequently, the Sarthavah, Dhan Shreshthi, and Shrenik— all three— proceeded to the Jain temple, where they performed ritual worship using exquisite flowers— such as the hundred-petaled and thousand-petaled Ketaki blossoms— and offered their spiritual devotion through sacred dance and devotional hymns. A bond of mutual affection and goodwill was thus established between the merchants. Following these events, having taking the material, the Sarthavah approached the King and addressed him: "O King! You are truly blessed and meritorious! Within your city reside such virtuous merchants— devout followers of the Jain faith— as this Dhan Shreshthi here. It is within your realm that I have discovered the 'Seven Metals,' the 'Nine Treasures,' and the 'Fourteen Gems.' Do not regard this Dhan Shreshthi as merely one among the common traders; for never, across the many cities I have traversed, have I ever encountered a merchant of such extraordinary caliber." The King, in turn, bestowed great honors upon the Sarthavah, presenting him with exquisite garments and precious ornaments. Thereafter, the Sarthavah — filled once again with deep reverence— returned to Dhan Shreshthi; bowing respectfully before both Dhan Shreshthi and Shrenik, he spoke:

"You repeatedly remember me by heart; do not forget." Speaking thus, the Sarthavah departed. For it is said:

The vine of noble affection— established since childhood within the garden bed of the heart— should be nurtured continuously through the water of letters and messages.

"May your journey be safe; may you arrive again swiftly; may you achieve your desired goals; and remember us when the time is right."

Now, at the home of Dhan Shreshthi, new performers— skilled in dance, song, and other arts— began arriving from all four directions, as did supplicants seeking wealth. Those wealthy individuals who had previously disparaged Dhan Shreshthi— calling him "unfortunate" and "foolish"— now became his business associates and bowed down at his very feet. Shrenik adopted the name "Gopal" for himself. Shreshthi, too, became overflowing with wealth, grain, and prosperity. Sunanda's husband, Shrenik, began dedicating himself to the worship of the Jina at the temple and distributing his wealth across the seven fields of merit.

Whatever goods Dhan Shreshthi purchased yielded him immense profit. He acquired a vast number of horses and commissioned the construction of a palace towering as high as Mount Kailash; within his stables, he stationed numerous servants to tend to and guard the horses. Many merchants, too, became his servant and began to serve him. Indeed, everyone pays homage to the man within whose home the Goddess of Wealth resides. For it is said:

"Come here," "Stand there," "Speak," "Remain silent," "Behave yourself"— in such ways do the wealthy play with those seekers of wealth who are afflicted by the insatiable planet of expectation.

Shrenik's affection for Sunanda deepened profoundly. Sunanda conducted herself entirely in accordance with her husband's wishes. In due course, after two years had passed, Sunanda conceived a child. As her pregnancy advanced, her appetite began to wane; she would consume a mere two or three morsels of food at a time or at times she would not eat at all. Whatever food she did consume would be vomited up the very next day; consequently, Sunanda became extremely frail. Merely walking would leave Sunanda gasping for breath. She fell at her father's feet and began to plead repeatedly, saying, "I do not know from one moment to the next whether I shall live or die. Bring me water; I am parched with thirst!"

One day, upon seeing his wife in such a condition, Shrenik turned to his mother-in-law and asked, "Why does your daughter appear so emaciated? Has she developed any dohad (pregnancy longing)? Please ask her about this. If she has indeed developed a longing, it must be fulfilled; otherwise, consider her already resting in the lap of death." Thereupon, approaching Sunanda, her mother asked, "My dear daughter, why does your body appear so frail? What is it that you desire?" Sunanda replied, "If I were to describe the nature of this longing that has arisen within me, it would be utterly beyond anyone's comprehension. Since fulfilling this longing of mine is

impossible, my death is inevitable." Her mother urged her, "My daughter, please tell me." Sunanda then spoke: "I envision myself riding upon an elephant, proceeding along the royal highway while distributing alms. As I do so, the King— accompanied by his entire family— walks ahead of me. I enter a Jinalaya (temple of the Jinās) and, with my own hands, perform Dravya Puja (material worship) using exquisite flowers, followed by Bhava Puja (spiritual worship) through hymns of praise and adoration. I yearn to have the King's royal musical instruments play before me, and to have dancers perform in my presence. I wish to meditate upon the Pancha-Parameshthi Mantra, to have a chhatra (royal parasol) held over my head, and to bestow charity exactly as my heart desires. I wish to feed my fellow co-religionists and honor them with gifts of clothing and other items. I desire to establish a decree of Amari (non-violence/protection of life) throughout the land, to strictly observe the vows of Sheel (chastity and virtue), to complete a pilgrimage of the holy shrines (Chaitya-paripati) and return home, and to offer pure, wholesome food— such as clarified butter— to the ascetic monks. Oh Mother, I have now revealed everything to you in its entirety. Without the granting of this Abhayadan (the gift of fearlessness and protection of life), my life cannot endure." Upon hearing all these words, the mother relayed the words spoken by her daughter to the son-in-law. Hearing his wife's wishes, Shrenik was delighted. A woman who gives birth to such a child is carrying a virtuous man. Such a child is born through the experience of the womb. It is said that:

Desires for virtuous deeds are born only through strong fortune; if these desires are fulfilled, they are like the fragrance of gold.

The good and bad deeds or practices of a person in the past are the result of those practices that cause the person to return to the same path.

Then the prince asked, "O Shresthi! Is this king's daughter, who was blind from birth, alive or dead?" Then Dhan Shresthi replied, "She is still blind from birth and alive. She is dear to the king, and therefore the king of the city of Bennatat acts according to her orders. Since childhood, she has desired to adopt the path of virtuous conduct and performs severe austerities." Seeing her dilated eyes, people believe that she is not blind, but can see. That is why she is called Sulochana. The king punishes anyone who calls this princess blind. She is very dear to the king.

Knowing that the king's daughter was blind, Shrenik said, "There is a way to fulfill your daughter's difficult-to-fulfill longing." Then the merchant asked, "What is the solution?" Shrenik said, "Take this gem and go to the king and clean the king's daughter's eyes with the water from this gem, which will give her divine eyes. If the king is pleased, then ask for the completion of your daughter's longing." Now when Dhan Shresthi went to the king with the gem, the king stood up with mutual respect and smiled lovingly. The merchant spoke in a hushed tone: "I am scarcely worthy to speak before you; nevertheless, I venture to utter something that may seem presumptuous. Please bring your daughter here." Upon his request, the King had his daughter brought to the site. Acting on the merchant's instructions, Sulochana

sprinkled water infused with the essence of gems over her eyes and washed them. Instantly, Sulochana began to perceive even the stars in broad daylight– in other words, her vision was completely restored. The King then declared, "O Merchant! Accept half of my kingdom as a reward." The merchant replied, "I have no need for a kingdom; however, I ask that you fulfill a specific longing– a Dohad– that has arisen in my daughter." Consequently, the King seated Sunanda alongside his own daughter upon the back of a royal elephant. The King then took the lead; accompanied by dancers, musicians, royal parasols, fly-whisks, and various ceremonial instruments, he proceeded along the royal highway. Sunanda offered worship to the Jineshwaras in every Jain temple along the way. Upon returning home, she summoned the ascetic monks and reverently offered them achitta (lifeless) food and water. Furthermore, she instituted a decree of Amari (non-violence toward all living beings) throughout the entire kingdom. As a result of these events, a deep and abiding friendship blossomed between the King's daughter Sulochana and the Dhan Shreshthi's daughter Sunanda. The King distributed ghee to every household in the kingdom and had festive streamers and decorative arches (toranas) erected at every shop in the marketplace. One day, King Shrenik said to his wife, Sunanda, "If we are blessed with a son, we shall name him Abhayakumar for you have manifested a longing to uphold the principles of Amari. Meanwhile, the aforementioned Sarthavah, having journeyed across the land and amassed a vast fortune, eventually arrived at the city of Rajgrih. King Prasenajit, observing the discord and rivalry among his ninety-nine sons and remembering obedient Shrenik, lamented before his wife, "What has become of Prince Shrenik– the son whom I humiliated and who, in his disgrace, abandoned the kingdom and departed for distant lands? Without that son, I find no sleep by night or day, nor can I breathe a single breath of peace. Since the moment of separation with that son, all joy has vanished from my life. I acted without forethought or wisdom; I do not know whether my son is alive or dead? Or perhaps wild beasts have devoured him? Or has he ended up serving as a domestic servant in someone else's home? Or is he wandering from door to door begging for alms during the rainy season– tormented by hunger and thirst? During the rains, lacking any shelter, is the rain beating down upon his head just as it does upon the beasts of the field? Is he suffering from the severe cold during the winter months? And how will Shrenik endure the thirst and scorching heat of the summer season? Dwelling upon these thoughts of Shrenik, the King became overwhelmed with grief.

At times, however, the King would reflect thus: "Whose son ? Whose father? Whose mother? Whose brother? Whose wife? All these relationships appear to be nothing more than the intricate web of a dream. Across countless lifetimes, all living beings have been– and continue to be, and will be– related to one another in various ways." As the King sat there, having thus stilled his mind, the Sarthavah approached him and asked, "O King! I had heard that you possess a hundred sons; yet, why do I now see only ninety-nine?" When the King recounted the circumstances of Shrenik's departure, the Sarthavah replied, "I once saw a young man– who bore a striking resemblance to your son and appeared to be of exceptional intellect– at the home of a Dhan Shreshthi

in the city of Bennatat. I approached him there and remarked, 'I believe I have seen you before, in Rajgrih.' To this, he retorted, 'The King's abode— that is to say, the bondage of kingship— is a fate I would not wish even upon my worst enemy!'" Hearing such words from the Sarthavah, King Prasenjit's heart was once again pierced with sorrow. Yet, King Prasenjit said, "Alas! That son never once confided his true circumstances to me; therefore, I shall not reveal his current whereabouts to these other sons." Keeping this resolve hidden deep within his heart, the King turned to the Sarthavah and said, "Why do you speak such falsehoods? That son was nothing but a lazy, foolish, and mean fellow; surely, after leaving this place, he must have wandered aimlessly and perished. For anyone who leaves their home of their own accord is destined to meet such an end and wanders from house to house like a pauper? Karma itself reveals nothing but gives him wisdom that makes him wander around like a beggar. For it is said that Brahma does not appear and slap a man, but gives him such intellect that he wanders like a pauper.

One who usurps another's mortgaged property and one who defrauds a trustworthy person are both vile, and you, the third one, are lying like this. Then Sarthvah came and said secretly, "If he is not Shrenik, then I am guilty of the sins of usurping mortgaged property, betraying trust, selling a girl, making false purchases and sales, murdering a woman, killing a cow, and killing a saint." The Sarthvah said, "I saw a prince sitting like a swan at Dhan Shresthi's shop in the town of Bennatat. The Shresthi obeys his orders in all matters as if they were the commands of the gods. With that prince's sacred words, I obtained Tejanturi from Dhan Shresthi's shop. That Tejanturi has brought much gold to my house. I also know that Dhan's daughter is married to your son." The king was pleased with the Sarthvah's words and was eager to bring his son here. Then the king said, "If my son is there, I will send my learned man with a problem I have created. If he is my son, he will quickly return after hearing the problem I have described." King Prasenjit then sent his learned man. The man sent by King Prasenjit went to Dhan Shresthi's house in Bennatat and handed the problem to a man named Gopal. The prince, named as Gopal, read the problem in such a way that the prince, who had used his wisdom to feed his brothers delicacies packed in a small basket without ever opening its lid, and gave them water from new earthen pitchers without unsealing their mouths. It was he who, after offering small portions of kheer (sweet pudding) from his own used plate to the dogs, consumed the rest himself. Why, then, does this young man— whose true character is of such high caliber— now reside in the city of Bennatat, living there as the husband of the Dhan Sarthavah's daughter? Having abandoned his parents and brothers to travel to a distant land, he now lives as a Ghar Jamai— a resident son-in-law— in another's home. How can such a man bear to live? His parents are now plunged into sorrow; why does he remain so far away, behaving like a villain?

In the past, when he was merely likened to a dog, he flew into a rage; yet now he lives as a Ghar Jamai— a status traditionally regarded as lowly and akin to that of a dog.

Therefore, O my heart! Reflect deeply upon this matter and tell me: which of these two situations is truly the better one?

Upon reading this problem (riddle) and grasping its significance, Gopal– shedding tears repeatedly– reflected within his own mind:

"There are many sons who, even when subjected to beatings and physical abuse, endure it all and eventually yield; yet sons such as I cannot bear even a single word of reproach.

The benevolent counsel of one's parents and teachers– counsel that is sweeter even than the nectar of immortality– is something that those unfortunate souls who fail to heed it are doomed to wander aimlessly in every direction."

Having thus reflected, that very servant was dispatched by Shrenik to King Prasenjit. The King read the letter, in which Shrenik had written: "The reproaches you cast upon me that will now become known to other princes as well; you called me a 'merchant' yet, I perceive that you spoke those words out of sheer affection constitute the essence of speech.

At a time when one seeks the favor of a king or a father, if– instead of receiving that grace– one is humiliated and cast down, who would wish to serve such a king?

Who would choose to live as a Ghar Jamai (resident son-in-law)– much like a pet dog kept in the house? Yet, what is a son to do if, having been humiliated by his father, he has nowhere else to turn?

Upon reading this message and grasping its true significance, father composed a written reply and dispatched it to Shrenik. Shrenik secretly read the father's letter, in which the following message was written:

"Reflect upon the words I spoke to you in the royal assembly – consider whether they constituted an act of honor or an act of humiliation– and only after such contemplation should you take of your meal."

The peacock says: "I have left my feathers behind in the forest, and thus I have become featherless– appearing now as vast and empty as the open sky itself. Yet, those very feathers now adorn and lend splendor to the King's crown."

Every word written by his father resonated with Shrenik like divine nectar. Consequently, Shrenik sent a return letter to his father, which the King read as follows:

"The loss of a single feather does not diminish the peacock's beauty in the slightest; similarly, my departure– the loss of just one son– will make no difference to you, for you still have ninety-nine other brothers of mine residing by your side in the city of Rajgrih."

Upon reading the message sent by his son, King Prasenjit composed a reply and sent it back, stating: –

"Just as large wooden planks bound to a ship prove invaluable when traversing the ocean– for without them, how could anyone possibly swim across the vast sea? So too you have left us and gone away like the fragments of wooden planks of the ship– then how shall we ever stay afloat?

Even if a leaf from the Kalpavriksha (the wish-fulfilling tree) is carried away by the wind and lands elsewhere, the shade of the Kalpavriksha remains cool nonetheless; for that which is inherently cool by nature possesses a nature that is cool through and through. In the same way, wherever you may go, you bring only happiness and well-being.

Having read all this, Shrenik finally wrote to King Prasenjit:

"As long as I remain alive here, I request that you continue to send me letters without interruption."

Subsequently, Shrenik got crafted ornaments for his ninety-nine brothers, as well as jewelry from gold and precious gems for his mother and sisters. For his father and brothers, he purchased horses of the finest breed. Shrenik secretly dispatched these exquisite gifts– each bearing his own name– to his father. Upon receiving them, his delighted father sent back a musical instrument known as a Bhambha for his son, accompanied by a letter stating: "O Son! The Bhil maiden whom you left behind in the forest is truly noble; she has brought honor and glory to our lineage in every respect.

O Son! The Bhils residing in the settlement (palli) that you passed through on your journey are now harboring anger against you."

Heeding these words from his father, Shrenik secretly and gradually moved his horses, wealth, and servants out of the city. Then, turning to his wife, he said, "I am going to my father." Sunanda replied, "I shall come with you; I cannot bear to remain here for even a single moment without you by my side." Shrenik responded, "Do not even mention the idea of coming along with me now." To this, Sunanda replied once more, saying, ""What name should be given to the son of us both who is to be born?" Shrenik said, "You should name him 'Abhay'– just as the specific longing (dohad) you had experienced." Then Sunanda asked, "When our son grows to be eight or nine years old and asks me, 'Where is my father?' what shall I tell him?" Thereupon, the Prince had some white chalk brought to him and wrote on the wall of the picture gallery: "The city is Rajgrih; the name is Gopal; the house is white. "This is what you must tell him."

Then, one day, Shrenik secretly slipped out of the city and joined the army that he had previously dispatched. Subsequently, marching forth with his troops, the Prince had the Bhambha (Drum) beaten near the capital of the Bhils in such a manner that, upon

hearing its sound, the chieftain of the Bhils mobilized his entire army and advanced to confront him. At that moment, the Bhil chieftain sounded his war-horn (Shehnai); hearing it, hundreds of thousands of Bhils gathered together— shouting war cries, brandishing their spears, and scowling in rage— vowing repeatedly, "We shall slay the enemy! We shall slay him!" Shrenik, having first invoked the protection of the mystical gem that guarded his body, then commenced the battle. The Bhils hurled various weapons— arrows, iron darts, spears, and the like— but not a single weapon struck even one of Shrenik's followers. Consequently, the Bhils, casting aside their weapons in panic, began to flee and offered their obeisance to Shrenik. The fleeing Bhil chieftain was captured and bound by Shrenik right there on the battlefield, and was subsequently taken— along with his wealth— to a remote and inaccessible location. For it has been said:

Wealth (Lakshmi) never arrives merely through hereditary succession, nor can it be transferred simply by being inscribed in legal documents; rather, wealth is attained through the attack with a sword, because this Earth is meant to be enjoyed solely by men of valor.

A lion is neither formally coronated nor ceremonially honored by the herds of deer; instead, the lion establishes his dominion entirely through the strength of his own prowess.

Then Shrenik spoke: "O Chief of the Bhills! Go ahead of me and show me the path to Rajgrih; lead us across the river that is visible. If you fail to do so, you shall surely meet your death at my hands." Thereupon, the Bhill pledged himself as Shrenik's servant and guided him along the route to Rajgrih. Accompanied by a retinue of one hundred and twenty-five thousand Bhills and a vast host of horses and other mounts, Shrenik traversed the entire valley step by step; upon reaching his destination, he prostrated himself at the feet of his parents with deep reverence and offered his salutations. Upon hearing of Shrenik's arrival, all his brothers gathered there and respectfully paid their obeisance to their elder brother. Subsequently, King Prasenajit— with the unanimous consent of all his sons— bestowed the kingdom upon Shrenik and himself embraced the ascetic life. Overcome with remorse and humility, the Bhill entered a hermitage as an ascetic, and dedicated himself to the pursuit of the highest spiritual meaning. Thereafter, Shrenik summoned the Bhill's son, appointed him as his own royal attendant, and granted him dominion over that very region. Shrenik then summoned all his brothers and, together with them, subdued those enemies who had previously defied his father's authority, compelling them to fall at his feet in submission.

On one occasion, after a rigorous process of evaluation, Shrenik appointed four hundred and ninety-nine ministers. Desiring to appoint one supreme minister above all others, Shrenik reflected that the burden of governance could not be effectively borne without the aid of an exceptional minister. "All those whom I have appointed as ministers thus far are arrogant, haughty, and consumed by envy. Until I find a minister

who is truly supreme— devoid of ego, humble, righteous, and possessed of a pure and lucid intellect— I remain a Prime Minister, not a King; because without a minister of such distinction, a kingdom can never attain stability." Because—

It is only a man of noble lineage, endowed with virtues and integrity, truthful in speech, devoted to righteousness, handsome in appearance, and possessed of a serene and cheerful mind, whom a King should appoint as his minister.

One should appoint a treasurer who is virtuous, patient, adept at appraising all manner of gems, and a man of pure and unwavering character.

Among ministers, the one who is worthy of highest praise is he who can interpret gestures and expressions, speaks pleasantly, is beloved by all, and is quick to grasp and act upon instructions given but once.

Reflecting such things in his heart, King Shrenik dropped his ring into a dry well and declared: "Whosoever— while seated at the edge of this well— can, by the sheer power of his intellect, retrieve this ring and place it upon his finger, shall receive from me half of my kingdom as well as the exalted office of Chief Minister." Having thus spoken, he stationed his attendants by the well's edge with the instruction: "If any man, seated at the well's brink, succeeds in retrieving this ring, come and inform me immediately; and should any other individual— be he a commoner or even a minister— accomplish this feat, report it to me just the same." The ministers standing by the well's edge gazed down at the ring with dismay, murmuring amongst themselves that this was surely a calculated stratagem devised by the King to subject them to needless hardship. Subsequently, other citizens of the town arrived at the site and made futile attempts to retrieve the ring, but they, too, met with disappointment.

Meanwhile, Sunanda gave birth to a son, whom she named Abhayakumar. As he grew up, he was sent to a school to receive his education, where he studied various scriptures under guidance of learned scholars.

On one occasion, while engaged in a dispute with his fellow students at the school, his peers taunted him, saying, "This Abhay is a fatherless child!" Deeply distressed by this remark, Abhay returned home and asked his mother to reveal the identity and nature of his father. His mother replied, "I do not know his whereabouts now; however, he married me here some time ago, and he departed for a foreign land quite suddenly while you were still in my womb."

Filled with sorrow, Abhay asked, "When my father departed, did he say anything to you, show you anything, or give you any written message?" His mother replied, "Before leaving this place, he inscribed a message upon the wall of this picture gallery." Upon reading the inscription on the gallery wall, the young prince understood the true identity of his father. Overjoyed, he approached his mother and declared, "I have now discovered who my father is; therefore, I shall go to wherever he resides." His mother replied, "I shall accompany you." Having informed his maternal grandparents of his plans, Prince Abhay set out toward the city of Rajgrih.

After traversing a considerable distance, he arrived at a garden on the outskirts of Rajgrih; there, he seated his mother and proceeded to the edge of a well. The local people explained, "Whoever, while standing at the edge of this well, can retrieve and wear this ring— using only their intellect as a test for the ministerial office— will be granted half the kingdom and the position of Chief Minister by the King." The Prince responded, "Let the one who possesses the true capability be the one to retrieve this ring— the symbol of the ministerial office— from the well and wear it. Do not, later on, claim that you, too, could have accomplished such a feat." Unanimously, the people urged him, "You alone should be the one to assume this office." Thereupon, the Prince first brought some cow dung and cast it into the well, directly onto the ring; he then heaped a large quantity of burning fire upon the dung. Within four ghadis (a short span of time), the cow dung dried completely; the Prince then drew water from a nearby well using a water-lifting device and filled the well containing the ring to the very brim. As the well filled to the brim, the ring rose to the surface; retrieving the ring from the well, the Prince placed it upon his finger. When news of this event reached the King, he was instantly filled with delight. He hastened to the spot and, upon beholding the young Prince's handsome and noble appearance, was greatly pleased.

The King inquired, "Where do you hail from?" The Prince replied, "I have come from the city of Bennatat." The King then asked, "Whose son are you?"

"Who are you?" he asked. The boy replied, "I am the son of Prajapal." The King then asked, "Do you know of Sunanda, the daughter of the Dhan Shreshthi, who resides there?" The boy answered, "She has given birth to a son, and he has been named Abhaykumar." "How old would he be?" the King inquired. The boy replied, "He is exactly the same age as I am, and in appearance, too, he is my exact likeness." The King asked, "How did you come to know him?" The Prince replied, "Through the natural course of events, a friendship blossomed between us; consequently, I cannot bear to be apart from him for even a single moment." "Then why did you leave him behind and come here?" the Prince replied, "I have actually come here accompanied by him." When the King asked, "Where is he, then?" the Prince replied, "He and his mother have come here to the royal garden." Upon hearing this, the King walked toward the garden, with the boy leading the way. The onlookers remarked, "Look! Despite his tender age, this boy is leading the King himself!" The King entered the garden and was reunited with his wife. The King asked, "Where is the son who was in your womb at that time?" She replied, "That very son is right here." The King then addressed the boy, "O my son! Why did you speak such a falsehood?" Abhaykumar replied, "I reside eternally within my mother's heart; that is why I spoke as I did." Thereupon, the King seated him upon his lap, summoned the royal state elephant, seated both his wife and son upon it, and brought them back to his palace amidst great festivities. Subsequently, the King bestowed the office of Chief Minister upon this son — a veritable repository of wisdom. With that boundless reservoir of intellect Abhaykumar leading his forces, the King went on to conquer many kingdoms.

On one occasion, while at Lord Vir Prabhu's Samavasaran (divine assembly), which was thronged with gods, goddesses, monks, and Sadhvis— Abhaykumar observed a monk who appeared serene, self-disciplined, and physically frail. He asked the Lord, "O Master! Who is this monk whom I see standing here before us?" Lord Vir replied, "To the east lies a city named Vitabhay, which is like the heavens. In that city resides a King named Udayan who governs his kingdom with justice and righteousness.

Once, I visited that place, and the Dev s (Devas) constructed a Samavasaran (divine assembly hall) there. To this Samavasaran came King Udayan— the sovereign of the city of Vitabhay— seeking to listen to the discourse on Dharma. It is said that:

For those who have attained a direct realization of the eternal Dharma and Right Faith (Samyag Darshan), the Goddess of Wealth never forsakes their home; indeed, she resides there eternally.

O Lord of the Universe! By the grace of Dharma, a man attains ever-increasing happiness; yet— alas, what a marvel of irony!— deluded by attachment and steeped in ingratitude, he never even deigns to utter the very name of Dharma.

O Rajendra (King of Kings)! Whosoever has listened to Dharma, witnessed it, practiced it, inspired others to practice it, or even simply rejoiced in its practice— that Dharma accompanies him across seven generations of his lineage.

For wise and learned men, Dharma alone is the worthy path to follow; for it acts as the supreme kinsman and, much like the Goddess of Wealth, unfailingly bestows every desired attainment.

From the very moment of conception within a mother's womb, living beings endure suffering; childhood brings the misery of a body soiled by impurities and the struggle to suckle at a mother's breast; youth, too, is fraught with the anguish born of separation and longing; and old age, likewise, is utterly devoid of substance. O Mankind! Tell me— if there exists even a shred of true happiness anywhere within this cycle of worldly existence?

This life is as fleeting as the hues of the twilight sky, as ephemeral as a bubble upon the water, or as transient as a dewdrop trembling upon the tip of a blade of grass; youth rushes past with the unstoppable velocity of a river's current. And yet, O sinful soul! Why do you not seek to attain spiritual enlightenment?

Upon hearing these and similar words from the lips of the Lord of Dharma, King Udayan's heart was imbued with the spirit of detachment.

If the kingdom were bestowed upon the son named Abhichi— born from his wife Prabhavti's womb— he would undoubtedly become engrossed in worldly power and consequently descend into a state of misery, for kingship is inherently a source of suffering. To ensure that his son would not fall into such a wretched state, King Udayan — who was deeply devoted to righteousness— set aside his own son and instead installed his sister's son, named Keshi, upon the throne.

It was solely through our teachings that King Udayan embraced ascetic initiation; having eradicated all his karmic bonds within this very lifetime, he is destined to attain liberation. Thereupon, Abhay folded his hands in reverence and asked, "O Lord! Which other Royal Sage is destined to attain liberation?" The Lord replied, "This Royal Sage, Udayan, shall be the last of the Kevalis (Omniscient)." Upon hearing this, Abhay bowed down to the Lord, returned home, and addressed King Shrenik: "Grant me permission to embrace ascetic initiation, so that I may eradicate all my karmic bonds and attain liberation." King Shrenik replied, "The time for me to embrace initiation has arrived; yours, however, is the time to govern the kingdom. Why, then, do you speak of taking initiation? You alone possess the capability to expand and enhance the prosperity of my realm." Abhaykumar responded, "If I—being your son—do not embrace initiation, I shall be deemed truly unfortunate. I implore you, in your kindness, to facilitate my initiation." King Shrenik then declared, "O Son! You may embrace initiation only when—in a fit of rage—I command you to 'Begone! Never show your face to me again!'" Abhay replied, "O Father! I shall do exactly as you command." Having thus bowed down to his father, Abhay returned to his own place and reflected:

"Just as a diamond can be cut only by another diamond, so too can this King's resolve be pierced only by the force of my own intellect." Harboring this thought, the sagacious Abhay began to serve his father with unwavering devotion and diligence every single day.

Once, a severe cold spell descended upon the land, causing immense suffering and distress among the people. It is said:

Cold is dispelled at night by human effort, at twilight by fire, and during the day by the heat of the sun.

As people complained of the intense cold, fire became exceedingly cherished; children started being honoured; and ailments of the head began to increase.

On this earth, truly virtuous individuals—those who bring unceasing joy to others—appear to be few in number, perhaps only five or six. In this sense, the current Kaliyuga has now come to resemble this biting cold.

Meanwhile, Lord Vir Prabhu arrived at a forest situated near the city of Rajgrih. King Shrenik, accompanied by Queen Chellana, went there to pay homage to the Lord; after listening to his discourse on Dharma, they began their return journey. On the way, beside a riverbank, they paid their respects to a tranquil, self-disciplined ascetic who was standing in the posture of Kayotsarg (meditative detachment); thereafter, the King returned to his palace by midday. The King performed the worship of the Jina (the Lord) and then took his meal. That night, King Shrenik fell asleep; however, Queen Chellana remained awake. Thinking of that ascetic, she exclaimed, "Alas! Such biting cold prevails—cold severe enough to extinguish the very life force of a living being—how must he be faring?" Hearing these words spoken by his wife—for he had suddenly

awakened— King Shrenik thought to himself: "This wife of mine is unchaste; clearly, another man is dearer to her than I am. There is absolutely no doubt about this."

"She is undoubtedly a woman of loose morals." As King Shrenik was thus consumed by these thoughts, the sun rose. In the morning, the King summoned Abhay Kumar and issued this command: "My inner quarters (Antahpur) have become a den of immorality; therefore, set fire to it immediately. Do not delay in this matter." Abhay, however, paused to reflect: "I cannot discern the King's true intent; why is he speaking in this manner?" Pondering thus, Abhay replied, "Father, I shall do exactly as you have commanded." That morning, King Shrenik proceeded to the Lord and having listened to the discourse on Dharma, asked the Lord: "O Lord! Are all my wives chaste or unchaste?" The Lord replied: "Chellana and all the others are indeed chaste." Hearing this, Shrenik hastened back from the Lord's presence. Meanwhile, Abhay reflected: "The command my father issued must have been given for a specific reason. Hasty actions often lead to regret." With this thought in mind, Abhay removed various items from the palace, set the mansions ablaze, and then set out to proceed to the Samavasaran. On the way, Shrenik encountered Abhay and asked, "What have you done?" Abhay replied, "I have carried out exactly what you commanded." Shrenik retorted, "Get out of my sight! Do not even let me see your face!" He added, "Does any sensible person act so thoughtlessly?" Abhay responded, "Your words are absolute authority to me." Having said this, he proceeded to Lord Vir and embraced initiation. Upon returning home, Shrenik found the palace reduced to ashes and realized, "I have been outwitted by Abhay; he must surely have taken initiation." Shrenik rushed back to the Samavasaran in a fit of rage; however, upon seeing that Abhay had already been initiated, he exclaimed, "I have indeed been deceived by you!" Uttering these words, he bowed at Abhay's feet, sought his forgiveness, and returned home. Abhay Kumar performed intense penance under the guidance of Lord Vir; having severed the bonds of Karma, he attained the state of a Dev in the Anuttara Vimana (the highest Devlok).

Thus concludes the story of Shri Abhay Kumar, illustrating the nature of Parinamiki Buddhi (Prudential Wisdom).



3. Dhandhan Kumar

With an eye toward future well-being, a person should refrain from engaging in actions that lead to the accumulation of Antaray Karma (obstructive karma); for, as a consequence of such conduct, Dhandhan Kumar was unable to obtain even a single morsel of food.

In the city of Dwarka, Shri Krishna Vasudeva had a wife named Dhandhan. She bore him a son, also named Dhandhan, who was endowed with auspicious physical attributes and great beauty. One day, Dhandhan Kumar approached Lord Neminath and listened to the Dharma (righteous path) expounded by the Lord— a path that is the very source of true happiness. It is said:

Birth in a noble lineage, freedom from disease, good fortune, extraordinary happiness, wealth, longevity, fame, knowledge, a beautiful spouse, horses, elephants, and the exalted status of a Chakravarti (universal emperor) or an Indra (celestial king)— attended by the service of hundreds of thousands of people— all these blessings are attained by living beings solely through the practice of Dharma. Furthermore, that pure-souled individual who, with a pristine mind, steadfastly observes the vows of self-restraint (Samyam) is the one who truly experiences the bliss of ultimate spiritual well-being.

According to the Jineshwaras (Conquerors of the Self)— who are themselves liberated from the cycles of birth, aging, and death— only two paths of Dharma have been prescribed in this world: the Sadhu Dharma (the path of the ascetic) and the Shravak Dharma (the path of the lay practitioner).

Attaining a state of profound detachment (Vairagya), Dhandhan Kumar— with wholehearted sincerity— formally embraced the vows of self-restraint, which ferries one across the ocean of worldly existence, under the guidance of the Lord; He then declared to the Lord: "O Master! I shall break my fast (Parana) only when I have successfully obtained alms through the power of my own spiritual merit (Labdhi)." Having undertaken this solemn vow (Abhigraha), Dhandhan Muni wandered through the city in search of alms; yet, he failed to receive even a single morsel of food. Eventually, Dhandhan Rishi approached the Lord and asked: "O Lord! For what reason am I unable to obtain pure alms?" Lord Neminath replied:

"In a previous life, in the region of Magadha, there lived a man of noble lineage named Parasara in a village called Dhanyapuraka. He was entrusted with the management of the King's agricultural lands. While supervising the plowing of the fields— a task performed using five hundred oxen-drawn plows— he did not release the oxen and the plowmen, even though it was time for their meal. Due to his refusal to release the oxen and the plowmen, he bound a Nikachit Antaray Karma (an unalterable karmic obstruction), met his death, and— after wandering through countless lifetimes— was eventually reborn as the son of Krishna, named Dhandhan. Upon

hearing these words from the Lord, Dhandhan Rishi began striving to eradicate those karmas.

On one occasion, Dhandhan Muni received modaks (sweet dumplings) as alms; he then approached the Lord and inquired, "Have the karmas of my past lives been exhausted or not?" At that moment, the Lord replied, "These modaks have come to you through Krishna's spiritual power (Labdhi), not through your own." Hearing that the modaks had been obtained through Krishna's power, Dhandhan Kumar— desiring to renounce the food— went to a brick kiln site; there, while crumbling the modaks into dust, he attained Keval Gyan through the practice of Shukla Dhyan (Pure Contemplation).

The Story of Shri Dhandhan Kumar Concludes.



4. Shriyak

A man who performs ascetic penance— even if under compulsion— attains manifest heavenly bliss, just like Shriyak .

In the city of Pataliputra, adorned with numerous Jain temples, reigned a king named the Ninth Nanda. He had a minister named Shakadala— a veritable jewel of the Kalpaka lineage— whose wife was named Lakshmivati. Both of them were deeply dedicated to performing deeds in service of the Jain faith. For—

Birth in a noble family, a healthy body, good fortune, extraordinary happiness and wealth, longevity, fame, knowledge, a beautiful wife, horses, elephants, service rendered by hundreds of thousands of people, and even the exalted status of Chakravarti or Indra— all these attainments come to living beings solely through the practice of Dharma.

In due course, the couple was blessed with two sons— named Sthulbhadra and Shriyak — who shone as brightly as the Sun and the Moon. They also had seven highly intelligent daughters named Yaksha, Yakshadatta, Bhuta, Bhutadatta, Sena, Vena, and Rena. The first daughter could memorize a scripture upon hearing it just once; the second, upon hearing it twice; and in this progressive manner, the seventh daughter could memorize a scripture after hearing it seven times. For it has been said:

Knowledge (Vidya) is a man's hidden, secret treasure and his true beauty; knowledge bestows worldly pleasures, fame, and happiness; and knowledge is the teacher even of teachers. When traveling abroad, knowledge serves as a kinsman; knowledge is akin to supreme good fortune; and knowledge— not wealth— is what is revered in royal courts. Therefore, a man devoid of knowledge is no different from a beast.

That King also had a courtesan named Kosha, whose beauty and charm surpassed even that of the celestial Apsaras. Captivated by her, Sthulbhadra lived in her home for twelve years. During his stay there, he squandered a vast fortune. As it has been said:

The wealth of Kshatriyas is typically expended on horses, weaponry, and bards; that of misers on land; of dissolute men on women, gambling, and theft; of courtesans on adornment; of merchants on trade; of farmers on agriculture; of sinners on alcohol and meat; and of virtuous men on religious and charitable festivities.

For this reason, Shriyak became a particularly trusted confidant of that king and was appointed as his personal bodyguard. Present there was a Brahmin named Vararuchi, who possessed a boon granted by the Goddess Saraswati; every day, he would present one hundred and eight newly composed poems to King Nanda. However, because both the individual and his poetry were steeped in falsehood, Minister Shakadal refrained from praising him before King Nanda; consequently, the King bestowed no rewards upon the Brahmin. Receiving no recompense, the Brahmin became despondent.

One day, the Minister advised the King to shun the company of those with a deluded outlook, stating: "My daughters are capable of reciting just as many poems as this Brahmin presents before you. He merely brings old compositions and claims them to be new."

On one occasion, when the King asked the Brahmin to recite his poetry, Shakadal's daughters also entered the assembly hall. The Brahmin arrived in the morning, having composed five hundred new poems, and proceeded to recite them. Thereupon, Shakadal's eldest daughter—having heard them but once—recited every single one of those poems. Subsequently, the second daughter, the third, and so on, down to the seventh daughter, each recited all the poems in succession. Astonished by this spectacle, the King exclaimed, "O foremost among ministers! Your daughters are the very embodiment of Goddess Saraswati and possess extraordinary brilliance!" He then issued a decree forbidding Vararuchi from ever entering the royal court again.

Thereafter, the Brahmin would compose one hundred and eight new poems every morning and, by reciting them in praise of the River Ganges, would receive one hundred and eight gold coins in return. Thus, his fame spread throughout the entire realm. People began to sing the praises of that Brahmin, exclaiming, "Oh! This Brahmin is virtuous and wise; surely, in a past life, he must have earnestly cultivated knowledge." For it is said:

Through the gift of knowledge, one becomes wise; through the gift of safety, one becomes fearless; through the gift of food, one becomes happy; and through the gift of medicine, one becomes free from disease.

Suspecting that the tales of the River Ganges' miraculous benevolence were untrue, Shakadal—the foremost among astute ministers—discreetly dispatched secret agents to

retrieve the pouch of gold coins the Brahmin had hidden within the river. The following morning, as the Brahmin entered the Ganges to bathe and retrieve his pouch, the King arrived at the scene accompanied by his minister. As the Brahmin, repeatedly offering hymns of praise to the Ganges, failed to locate the pouch, Minister Shakadal spoke up: "Oh! Has the Ganges failed to grant you your desired object?" The Brahmin replied, "I do not know why the Ganges is withholding it today. She has granted my requests in the past, but now she refuses; surely, a period of misfortune has dawned upon me today— what am I to do?" It has been said:

When misfortune dawns, a man may be plunged into destitution in an instant; yet, when fortune favors him, even the Goddess of Knowledge herself comes under his sway.

Subsequently, the minister retrieved the pouch, presented it to the King, and asked the Brahmin, "To whom does this pouch belong?" The Brahmin pondered: "If I deny that it is mine, this pouch of gold coins will be lost forever. Yet, if I claim it as mine, I shall be branded a deceiver." Consequently, the Brahmin remained silent. Witnessing his silence, the King and the assembled crowd heaped scorn upon him; deeply resentful, the Brahmin thereafter harbored enmity toward the minister and began to constantly look for an opportunity to exploit his vulnerabilities. On one occasion, while preparations were underway for the wedding of Shriyak , the malevolent Brahmin, acting out of malice, taught the schoolchildren this verse:

"Does King Nanda not realize what Minister Shakadal intends to do? He plans to slay King Nanda and install Shriyak upon the throne."

Hearing many children repeating these words, the King reflected that the words of children are rarely mistaken; for it is said:

"Lightning during the day is never in vain— meaning rain is certain to follow; the thunder of clouds at night is never in vain— meaning rain is certain to follow; the words of women and children are never in vain; and a vision of the gods is never in vain."

Thus, accepting the children's words as truth— and having also heard reports of a throne, royal umbrella, fly-whisks, and other regalia being prepared within the Minister's home— the King became enraged with the Minister. The King resolved to execute the Minister along with his entire family. Upon learning of this turn of events, the Minister consumed a fast-acting poison designed to cause death within a single day. Thereafter, having performed his final spiritual rites, the Minister summoned Shriyak and said, "I have consumed poison; I shall die by this evening. The King is furious with my family; therefore, when I go to pay my respects to the King, you must strike me down. Only in this way will the safety and well-being of our entire family be ensured." Subsequently, when Shakadal went to offer his obeisance to the King, the King turned his face away in disdain.

At that moment, Shriyak stepped forward and declared, "Whosoever proves to be a traitor to the King shall have his head severed by this very sword of mine!" Having uttered these words, he severed his father's head with a single stroke, as effortlessly as one might snap the stalk of a lotus. The King immediately turned to face him and asked, "O Shriyak! Why have you slain your own father?" Shriyak replied, "Whosoever harbors malice toward you— my sovereign and master— shall receive precisely this punishment at my hands." Pleased by this response, the King said, "Explain to me the true reason why you killed your father." Thereupon, Shriyak revealed the true identity of the Brahmin; then the King ordered the Brahmin to leave the country. Later, during the cremation rites of Shakadal, the King said to Shriyak, "You are truly blessed, and among servants, you are the very pinnacle. You embody the ideal servant exactly as described in the scriptures. For it is said:

He who marches at the forefront during battle, who always walks behind in the city, and who ever stands guard at the entrance of his master's palace— such a one is dear to the King.

He who wishes for his master's longevity, who possesses the wisdom to discern between right and wrong actions, and who executes his duties without hesitation or doubt— such a one is dear to the King.

Just as the sun cannot shine in all its glory without its rays, so too a king cannot shine without a servant who bestows grace and benevolence upon the people.

O Shriyak! Accept this office of Minister." Shriyak replied, "My elder brother, Sthulbhadra, is currently residing in the home of the courtesan Kosha; please bestow the ministerial post upon him instead." Upon hearing this, the King thought, "Alas! I have never before encountered anyone as free from greed as this man." For it has been said:

Often, the earth is teeming with the greedy; driven by avarice, countless people venture across the seas or journey to foreign lands.

All one's teeth have fallen out, the intellect has grown fickle, hands and feet have begun to tremble, tears stream from the eyes, physical strength has waned, and the beauty that once graced one's form has departed; Jara— old age, that formidable handmaiden of Yama, the God of Death— has arrived; yet, amidst all this, that solitary maid akin to Trishna (insatiable craving), continues to dance unceasingly within the city of the heart.

Subsequently, the King dispatched his servants to summon Sthulbhadra. The royal servants proceeded to the courtesan's abode; there, in the upper chamber, they found Sthulbhadra— who was engrossed in a game of dice with the beautiful courtesan. Bowing respectfully before him, they conveyed their message and informed him of the circumstances surrounding the death of Minister Shakadal and stated that the King was summoning him to accept the office of Minister. Upon hearing this, he was struck— as if by a thunderbolt— and, shedding tears from his eyes and spitting the paan

from his mouth, he instructed Kosha to accompany him to the King's palace. To this, Kosha replied:

"Just as the lotus remains unaffected– neither growing nor diminishing– during the rainy season, who will wait for the arrival of the autumn season that brings about its full bloom? In other words, who will wait for you until evening?

Other couples enjoy uninterrupted bliss and prosperity; they never experience the sorrows of separation. Yet, when separation does befall them, the anguish they endure is infinitely greater than that of death itself.

Lord Mahadev alone is worthy of praise; for, terrified by the agony of separation and casting aside all shame before the three worlds, he kept his consort ever by his side, assuming the form of Ardh-Nari Jateshwar (the Lord in the form of half-woman).

What greater punishment could you possibly desire than having one's head severed from one's body? For, in the future, the inevitable separation from your beloved still awaits you."

Having offered these entreaties, the courtesan requested, "Please leave someone here to stand guard until you return." Accordingly, Sthulbhadra left his attendant behind, proceeded to the King's presence, and offered his obeisance. The King then commanded him to accept the ministerial post. Sthulbhadra replied, "I shall give you my answer after due deliberation." With these words, he went to the Ashoka forest adjacent to the palace and began to reflect:

"I know full well that it was this very ministerial post– akin to an enemy– that caused my father's demise. Therefore, by renouncing it, I shall spare myself the misfortune of suffering a similar fate."

O Friend Sorrow! O Discernment! O Lord! O Detachment! O Gentleness! O Mother Compassion! O Goddess Forgiveness! O Companion Modesty! Hear me, all of you! Why did you not come to me and my kin in due order beforehand? And why, having abandoned us here in the very depths of our youth, did you depart so hastily?

It is the common experience and direct observation of the wise that a king cannot truly attain friendship; or, if he does, it signals the advent of a cataclysm.

I shall not accept the office of a minister– a position that ultimately leads to one's downfall. Instead, I shall embrace the path of the Jineshvara– that is, the vow of Diksha (initiation)– which is the true cause of supreme spiritual elevation.

The head is the seat of the intellect in its myriad forms; it is typically adorned and covered by dark hair. Therefore, in a surge of spiritual fervor, he plucked out every strand of hair– an act known as Loch (ritual hair plucking).

He who once adorned himself with garments of many hues and with resplendent jewelry– that very Sthulbhadra, having now embraced the path of renunciation– at that

moment donned garments devoid of all color; that is to say, he assumed the ascetic garb.

He who, amidst the rise of personal suffering, once remained bound by the Rajas quality (the principle of worldly activity and passion), now cast aside that Rajas quality and, as a means to transcend all suffering, accepted the Rajoharan (the ritual broom of the ascetic).

Having resolved thus, Sthulbhadra— now a recipient of the sacred vows— approached the King and bestowed upon him the blessing of Dharmalabh (spiritual merit). The King exclaimed, "What is this that you have done?" Sthulbhadra replied, "I have made my decision. The office of a minister is a source of suffering; therefore, I have plucked out my hair and performed the rite of Loch." For it has been said:

A seal (Mudra) in the hand, a seal upon the lips, a seal upon both feet, and finally, a seal within the home— such is the nature of worldly business: a life bound by these five seals.

And thus, King offered praise to Sthulbhadra who had now renounced all worldly pleasures, including the company of courtesans:

"You are blessed, for you have swiftly renounced the fleeting pleasures of worldly life— such as the company of courtesans— and embraced instead the supreme bliss of the empire of self-restraint, which alone grants eternal happiness."

Blessed are those whose minds are ever-eager to offer alms to those who observe religious vows; who worship the Jineshwaras daily; who destroy the poison of sin through righteous contemplation; who undertake the renovation of Jain temples; who commission skilled artisans to craft beautiful idols and subsequently consecrate them; and who are deeply proficient in the study and listening of the scriptures. Such individuals are truly worthy of being called Shravaks (lay devotees) upon this earth.

Thereafter, having bestowed religious blessings upon the King, Sthulbhadra departed for the forest. There, at the feet of a Guru named Shri Sambhutivijay, he formally received initiation into the ascetic order. Consequently, the King appointed Shriyak to the office of Minister. While discharging his royal duties, Shriyak performed the worship of the Jina three times a day, observed religious rituals— such as Pratikramana (repentance)— twice a day, and dedicated his wealth to the service of the "Seven Fields of Merit." Shriyak commissioned the construction of one hundred Jain temples and three hundred rest-houses (Dharmashalas). It is said:

"Wealth expended upon these 'Seven Fields'— namely, male ascetics (Sadhus), female ascetics (Sadhvis), male lay devotees (Shravaks), female lay devotees (Shravikas), Jain temples (Jin Bhavans), Jain idols (Jin Pratimas), and Jain scriptures (Jinagamas)— leads to the attainment of liberation (Moksha) and yields merit of infinite magnitude."

In due course, Shriyak secured the ministerial post for his own son through the King's consent, and subsequently, he too received initiation into the ascetic order from his Guru.

On one occasion, as the holy festival of Paryushan approached, Shriyak's sister–Yaksha, a woman of exemplary virtue and chastity (Mahasati)– addressed him, saying: "Today marks the annual holy festival; therefore, any meritorious deed performed on this day yields infinite spiritual fruit, for it is said:

'Those souls who remain single-mindedly focused upon the teachings of the Jina (Jinshasan); who are ever-zealous in promoting the faith (Prabhavna) and performing worship; and who listen to the sacred Kalpasutra twenty-one times– such souls swiftly cross over the vast ocean of worldly existence.'"

On the festivals of Samvatsari and Chaumasi, as well as on auspicious lunar days such as Ashtami, one should treat all living beings with reverence– both during the worship of the Jinas and while practicing asceticism.

Having thus instructed him, the nun Yaksha administered to Shriyak , in due succession, the vows of Navkarshi (abstinence until sunrise), Sadhaporisi (abstinence until mid-morning), Purimaddh (abstinence until noon), Ekasana (eating only once a day), and finally, in the evening, a complete fast (Upavas). That very night, Shriyak passed away suddenly; deeply grieved by this loss, the nun Yaksha, accompanied by the entire Sangh (religious community), performed Kaussagga (meditative standing) to ascertain the nature of Shriyak 's afterlife. Thereupon, the Shasana Devi (Guardian Goddess of the Order) transported the nun Yaksha to the Mahavideha Kshetra (the Great Videha Realm), into the presence of Lord Simandhar Swami. Before Lord Simandhar Swami, the nun Yaksha presented the doubts and questions that weighed upon her mind. Lord Simandhar Swami replied, "Shriyak met his end due to the natural exhaustion of his lifespan, not as a consequence of his ascetic practices; therefore, you should not grieve, no one can extend the duration of their allotted life." It is said:

"Neither knowledge nor medicine, neither father, brother, nor son; neither one's cherished deity nor a mother bound by ties of deep affection; neither wealth, kinsmen, nor attendants; neither physical strength nor even the gods or the King of Gods– none possess the power to extend the span of one's life."

The nun Yaksha then inquired, "Where has my brother been reborn?" Lord Simandhar Swami replied, "He has been reborn as a resplendent celestial being (Deva) in the Saudharma Devalok; subsequently, through the spiritual merit accrued from his practice of Dharma, Shriyak shall attain Moksha (liberation)." Filled with joy upon hearing this, as the nun Yaksha prepared to depart, the Lord (Prabhu) expounded upon four specific Chulikas (supplementary verses/teachings). She listened attentively, and the four Chulikas became firmly imprinted in her memory. Thereafter, the Guardian Goddess transported the nun Yaksha back and placed her amidst the assembled Sangh.

Standing before her spiritual teachers (Gurus) and the entire community, the nun Yaksha recounted the details of Shriyak 's auspicious rebirth and presented the four Chulikas to her teachers. The teachers subsequently incorporated two of these Chulikas into the Dashavaikalika Sutra and two Chulikas (supplementary sections) were appended to the end of the Acharanga Sutra. Subsequently, the ascetic nun Yaksha herself began to undertake rigorous penance. At that time, her spiritual preceptors explained that those who practice asceticism on auspicious festival days—such as the Ashtami (eighth day of the lunar fortnight)—gradually exhaust their karmic bonds and attain liberation; for indeed, penance is declared to be the very instrument that severs even the most deeply entrenched (nikachita) karmas. It has been stated:

The karmas that revered monks exhaust through practices such as Paurushi (partial fasting), complete fasting, or Chattha (three-day fasting) are such that even beings in hell cannot exhaust them over the course of a hundred thousand or a lakh years. Furthermore, the karmas that beings in hell take a thousand years to deplete are the very same karmas that a fasting soul, imbued with pure spiritual intent, can exhaust through Nirjara (dissipation of karma).

Whatever seems distant, whatever is arduous to attain, and whatever lies far beyond reach— all of this can be accomplished through the power of penance; because penance is indeed very difficult. Thus, having performed penance, the ascetic nun Yaksha eventually ascended to the heaven.

The Story of Shri Shriyak Concludes.



5. Acharya Arnikaputra and King Udayi

A person who— even when attacked and killed by enemies— forgives them with a spirit of profound benevolence attains the supreme wealth of Liberation (Moksha), just as Arnikaputra Acharya did.

In times past, within the city of Rajgrih, there reigned a monarch named Shrenik. Through his devoted service to the lotus feet of Lord Vir Prabhu, he had cultivated the Tirthankara Gotra (the spiritual lineage destined to produce a Tirthankara); ruling with righteousness, he governed and protected the earth in accordance with the path of justice. It is said:

If the King is righteous, the subjects are righteous; if the King is sinful, the subjects are sinful; and if the King is impartial, the subjects, too, remain impartial. The subjects invariably follow the King's lead; for this very reason, the adage "As is the King, so are the subjects" holds true.

King Shrenik had many queens— including Chellana— and numerous sons, such as Konik, Abhay Kumar, and Megh Kumar. Konik, having confined his father Shrenik within a wooden cage, usurped the throne and assumed power. Every day, he would order that Shrenik be subjected to 100 lashes of the whip. Upon Shrenik's death, Konik established the city of Champa. Having fashioned the artificial gems required of a Chakravartin (Universal Emperor) and having conquered three continental regions, he proceeded toward a mountain cave with the intent of conquering the three regions lying beyond the Vaitadhya range. There, engulfed by the flames that erupted from the cave's entrance, Konik perished and was subsequently reborn in the Sixth Hell. His son, Udayi, then ascended the throne; yet, as he gazed upon the various pleasure gardens and private chambers constructed by his father, he was overcome with profound sorrow and sank deep into an ocean of grief. With a mind rendered vacant by sorrow, the King neglected all his royal duties; consequently, his ministers approached him and said, "O Sovereign! A new city ought to be established." Thereupon, the King issued a royal decree to his most skilled astrologers and seers, commanding them to search for an auspicious location suitable for founding a new metropolis. Those ministers, looking for a suitable location for the city, went to the banks of the river Ganga. Seeing a tree called Royda, full of red flowers and providing dense shade, they were struck by a miracle.

Watching the Chaas bird sitting on a branch of the Royda tree and seeing creatures falling into its open mouth, they thought to themselves that just as creatures are seen falling into the mouth of the Chaas bird, establishing a city at this place would automatically bring immense wealth to the king.

Seeing this, the ministers went to the king and described the location. The king, overjoyed, asked a learned and elderly Naimittik to explain the significance of the Royda tree. Then Naimittik said, "This Royda tree is no ordinary one. I was told this by a wise man earlier. This Royda tree is sacred and grew from the skull of a great

sage. The soul at the root of the tree is believed to be incarnate." The king asked, "Who was that great sage?" Naimittik replied, "Oh my God!" A merchant's son named Devadutt lived in northern Mathura. Once, he came to southern Mathura to earn money. There, he befriended a merchant's son named Jaisingh. One day, Jaisingh invited him to his home for dinner, so Devadutt went to his house. While eating, Devadutt saw Jaisingh's sister Arnika serving the food and fell in love with her, captivated by her beautiful appearance. It has been said that:

Among the five senses, the sense of taste is the most difficult to conquer; among actions, the infatuating action is the most difficult; among vows, the vow of celibacy is the most difficult; among secrets, the secret of the mind, these four are very difficult to win over.

The next day, Devdutt approached his friend and pleaded with him to marry his sister. Jai Singh said, "I will give everything I have, including my wealth and this sister, to the one who will not leave my home, that is, who will stay at my home. This sister of mine is dearer to me than my life." Devdutt replied, "I will do as you say." Jai Singh then arranged for Arnika's marriage to Devdutt on an auspicious day. While enjoying the pleasures of life with her, Devdutt received a letter from his parents one day, saying:

"O son! You are living far away, and we have grown old. We will survive only if you come here." Reading this letter, tears welled up in his eyes. When his wife asked why Devdutt was crying, Devdutt didn't answer. He took the letter and read it himself. The parents had written, "O son! We both are very close to death and have grown old. If you want to see us alive, then come here soon. Do not think twice. After reading this, his wife said, O Swami! Your parents are old, therefore you must go there. Devadutta said, I had already said that I will stay here. If I say now that I will go there, it will be a breach of my promise. No one should break a promise. Because it is said that :

Even if wealth is destroyed, a brother loses his love, a kingdom is ruined, a deep bond is broken, even if life is lost, a patient man does not break his words.

We should speak only as much as we can sustain. The mute possess no voice, let not living human beings become mute— that is to say, let not our words prove futile while we are alive; they may well become futile after death, but not before.

In response, the wife said, "O Lord! There is no pilgrimage site (Tirtha) equal to one's parents; therefore, even if a vow is broken for their sake, no sin is incurred thereby." For it has been said:

The mother is a pilgrimage site akin to the River Ganges; the father is a pilgrimage site akin to Pushkar; and the Guru is a pilgrimage site akin to Kedarnath. Thus, parents constitute a pilgrimage of the highest magnitude.

Having thus reassured her husband and gently reasoned with her brother, Arnika— who harbored immense affection for her spouse— turned to her husband and said, "O Lord!

Let us depart; I have successfully persuaded my brother." Upon hearing this, Devdatt reflected: "Nowhere have I ever witnessed a wife who cherishes her husband so deeply and is so dedicated to his well-being." It is said:

A wife who is devoted to her mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, husband, and brother-in-law and who remains steadfast in the performance of righteous deeds is a treasure obtained only through the greatest of good fortune.

Thereupon, Devdatt, accompanied by his wife, set forth toward North Mathura. In due course, Arnika— who was then pregnant— gave birth to a son while still on the journey. During the celebration of the child's birth, Arnika declared, "It is my mother-in-law and father-in-law who shall bestow a name upon this son." Consequently, throughout the journey, the entire family affectionately referred to the child simply as "Arnikaputra." Eventually, Devdatt arrived at his home city. He reunited with his parents, while Arnika reverently bowed at the feet of her mother-in-law and father-in-law. The parents bestowed upon the child the name "Sandhiran"; nevertheless, in popular parlance, he continued to be known as "Arnikaputra." Thus, bringing joy to all around him, the young boy grew and matured. In the fullness of time, having attained the bloom of youth, "Arnikaputra" sat before his spiritual preceptors to listen to the teachings of righteousness, thereby becoming deeply immersed in the path of Dharma. As it has been said:

Protecting living beings, paying homage to the Jineshwar, listening to the scriptures with devotion, bowing down to the ascetics, renouncing arrogance, revering a true Guru, eradicating deceit, subduing anger, uprooting the tree of greed, purifying the mind, and taming the horses of the senses— all these are the means to attain liberation.

Having listened to such religious teachings and regarding worldly pleasures as mere grass, that Arnikaputra received initiation from Acharya Jaisingh. Studying the scriptures under his Guru with humility and discipline, the Arnikaputra gradually attained the rank of Acharya. Accompanied by a large retinue of disciples and continuing to enlighten worthy souls, Acharya Arnikaputra arrived, upon reaching old age, at the city of Pushpabhadra, situated on the banks of the Ganges. There, King Pushpaketu was ruling his kingdom with justice. It is said:

If the King is righteous, his subjects, too, become righteous; if the King is sinful, his subjects become sinful; if the King is just, his subjects become just— for the subjects invariably follow the King. As the saying goes: "As is the King, so are the subjects."

King Pushpaketu had a wife named Pushpvati. The couple was blessed with twins— a son named Pushpchul and a daughter named Pushpchula. As they played and studied together, a deep and profound affection blossomed between the two children. Observing this, the King reflected: "If I were to arrange separate marriages for these two children and thereby force a separation between them, they would undoubtedly perish. Furthermore, I myself would be unable to bear the anguish of their separation; therefore, I shall arrange for them to be married to one another." Having resolved this,

he summoned his ministers and subjects and asked them: "Who is the rightful owner of a gem that is discovered within the antahpur (royal inner quarters)?" They replied, "Your Majesty, the King— you alone are its rightful owner. You may place them wherever you desire." Upon hearing this, the King remarked, "If my son and daughter were to be separated from one another, such separation could well lead to their deaths." Having deliberated in this manner— and despite his wife's attempts to dissuade him— the King arranged for his son and daughter to be married to each other. Thereafter, the couple began to indulge in worldly pleasures and sensual delights.

The Queen said to the King, saying, "O my Lord! Why have you committed such a wrongful act by arranging for your own son and daughter to marry one another?" The King, rebuking the Queen sharply, retorted, "What nonsense are you uttering? If you ever speak like that again, I shall have you killed!" Thus humiliated and scorned by the King, the Queen developed a profound sense of detachment from worldly life; she sought out a spiritual preceptor, received initiation into the ascetic path, and – through the practice of extremely rigorous penance— was reborn as a Dev in the Pushyavati Devlok.

Now dwelling as a Dev, Pushyavati – utilizing her Avadhi-gyan (clairvoyant knowledge) – perceived the incestuous transgression committed by her son and daughter. In order to enlighten and guide them toward righteousness, she revealed to Pushpchula the true nature of hell. Having witnessed the excruciating torments of hell— and thereby attaining spiritual insight while simultaneously feeling deep remorse— Pushpchula recounted the entire terrifying experience to her husband. Terrified by this revelation, the King subsequently commissioned various rituals and rites to restore peace and well-being.

That Dev continued, day after day, to grant Pushpchula visions of the suffering endured by souls in hell. The King summoned various religious scholars and philosophers, including the Buddhists, and inquired, "What is the true nature of hell? Describe it to me." Some defined hell as the confinement within the womb; others described it as imprisonment in a dungeon; some identified it with the misery of poverty; while yet others equated it with the bondage of servitude. Upon hearing these various interpretations offered by the scholars, the Queen— curling her lip in disdain— declared, "Hell is nothing like that!" Thereupon, the King approached Arnikaputra Acharya and asked, "What, then, is the true nature of hell?" The Guru, having described the actual characteristics of hell, explained: "In the first hell, the minimum duration of Jaghanya Sthiti is ten thousand years, while the duration of Utkrishta Sthiti extends to one Sagaropam. In the second hell, the duration of Jaghanya Sthiti is one Sagaropam, and the duration of Utkrishta Sthiti is three Sagaropamas . In the fourth, Jaghanya is of seven Sagaropam and Utkrishta is of ten Sagaropam, in the fifth hell Jaghanya is of ten Sagaropam and Utkrishta is of seventeen Sagaropam, in the sixth hell Jaghanya is of seventeen Sagaropam and Utkrishta is of twentytwo Sagaropam, in the seventh hell Jaghanya is of twentytwo Sagaropam and Utkrishta is of thirtythree Sagaropam.

In all the seven hells there is Area (Kshetra) pain and pain caused by the body without weapons, but the pain caused by weapons is in the first five hells and in the first three hells there is pain caused by the Paramadhamis (beings of supreme abode). That is, in the first three hells there is pain caused by the Paramadhamis, pain caused by weapons, pain caused by the Area and pain caused by the Area. And in the fourth and fifth hells there is pain caused by kidnapping and pain caused by the Area, similarly in the sixth and seventh hells there is mutual and area pain.

The queen, hearing what the guru said, asked, "O Lord! Have you also dreamt?" The acharya replied, "The nature of hell can be understood from the scriptures spoken by Lord Jineshwar." Pushpchula replied, "O Lord! What kind of deeds lead to hell?" The guru replied, "Beings go to these hells through the great beginning, through possessions, through enmity with the guru, through killing a five-sensed creature, and through eating meat."

The soul god of Pushpvati showed Pushpchula the heavens in a dream. The king, as before, inquired about the nature of heaven from the hypocrites, who replied, "Heaven is only a diet of exquisite dishes, wearing divine clothes, and sitting on the best vehicle and seat." When the king and queen asked the guru, the guru replied, "By practicing the householder's dharma along with the worship of right conduct (Samyaktva), one attains happiness in the twelve heavens." In the Agamas it is stated that:

In the first Devlok , Saudharma, there are 32 lakh celestial vehicles (Vimanas); in the second, Ishana, there are 28 lakh; in the third, Sanatkumara, there are 12 lakh; in the fourth, Mahendra, there are eight lakh; in the fifth, Brahma, there are 4 lakh; in the sixth, Lantaka Devlok, there are 50,000; in the seventh, Mahashukra, there are 40,000; in the eighth, Sahasrara, there are 6,000; in the ninth (Anata Devlok) and tenth (Pranata Devlok) combined, there are 400; and in the eleventh (Arana Devlok) and twelfth (Achyuta Devlok combined, there are 300 Vimanas.

Through the beneficial counsel of Shakrendra, who was adorned with a magnificent crown and resplendent, shimmering earrings and other ornaments, the elephant Airavata became his celestial vehicle. This illustrates the immense spiritual power (Riddhi) possessed by Shakra.

Thus enlightened, the Queen said, "O Lord! Grant me permission to embrace the monastic path." The King replied, "I cannot bear the pain of separation from you for even a single moment. If you choose to embrace the monastic vows, you must remain within my city and take only pure, faultless food." She accepted the King's terms, and the King subsequently arranged for her initiation. Residing within her husband's city, Queen Pushpchula would receive pure, faultless food— free from the forty-two specific impurities— directly from the husband's house. Once, through the power of his spiritual insight, Acharya Arnikaputra foresaw an impending famine; consequently, he dispatched his Gachchha (monastic congregation) to another region. Being physically frail himself, Acharya Arnikaputra remained behind. Queen Pushpchula, drawing

from the royal inner quarters, would bring pure food and water to serve her Guru. Through her exemplary and devoted service to her Guru, this Mahasati progressively ascended the Kshapaka Shreni (the ladder of spiritual annihilation of karmas) and attained Keval Gyan. Even after attaining Keval Gyan, she did not cease her devoted service to her Guru. For, until the true nature of the attainment of Keval Gyan is recognized by Chhadmastha (those who are still in the state of limited knowledge), even a Kevali (omniscient being) would offer pure food with humility. Despite being endowed with Keval Gyan, that ascetic nun continued to bring and offer pure food to her Guru.

Once, amidst a pouring rain, when the Kevalgyani nun Pushpchula brought food for her Guru, the Guru said, "O child! O virtuous one! You possess the knowledge of the scriptures; why, then, did you bring food in this pouring rain?" She replied, "I have carefully brought this food here, ensuring that I traversed only those areas where the water (Apkaya) was inanimate and devoid of life." The Guru asked, "How did you determine that the water was inanimate?" She replied, "I was able to discern this solely through the grace of your holy feet." The Guru rose, offered Michchhami Dukkadam (an apology for his transgression), and—repeatedly reproaching himself for having inadvertently offended a Kevali— he asked the nun, "Will I attain liberation (Moksha) or not?" The Kevali replied, "Do not lose patience; you will attain Keval Gyan while descending into the River Ganges." Subsequently, the Acharya, accompanied by a large number of people, boarded a boat to cross the River Ganges. Wherever the Acharya sat, that part of the boat would sink low into the water. Eventually, when the Acharya moved to sit in the center of the boat, the entire vessel began to sink; at that point, the people threw the Acharya into the water. In a previous life, he had kept a woman as a concubine and had committed a transgression against her by subjecting her to torment. In this current life, she had been reborn as a Vyanteri (a Devi of the intermediate realm), and it was she who caused the Acharya to be impaled upon a stake (Shuli) in the water. Even while impaled upon the stake, the Acharya reflected, "Alas! Through the shedding of my blood, I am causing harm to the living beings within the water." Meditating thus— and having ascended the Kshapaka Shreni (the spiritual ladder of karmic annihilation)— the illustrious Acharya Arnikaputra attained Keval Gyan as all his karmas were completely eradicated; shortly thereafter, as his lifespan came to an end, he attained final liberation (Siddhi) as an Antakrit Kevali (one who attains liberation in the very lifetime in which omniscience is achieved). Thereupon, the Devas residing nearby gathered to celebrate the grand festival marking the attainment of Keval Gyan by that Antakrit Kevali. "Therefore, that holy site became renowned in this world by the name of Prayag. Due to the tradition of following in the footsteps of predecessors— stemming from the incident of being impaled on a stake— devotees of other Tirthas (pilgrimage sites), such as those dedicated to Lord Shiva, continue to have saavs run across their bodies even to this day. "As aquatic creatures gnawed at the Acharya's body, his skull was carried by the water currents and washed ashore onto the riverbank. Drifting hither and thither, the skull— much like a seashell— eventually came to rest in a secluded,

rugged spot along the riverbank. From somewhere, a seed of the Royda tree fell into that skull. In due course, the seed sprouted, piercing through the skull, and grew into a Royda tree; over time, it grew to a colossal size. Thus has the glory of the Royda tree been recounted."

Upon beholding this very Royda tree, King Udayi issued a command to his servants to establish a new city. Those wise servants, hearing the cry of a jackal emanating from the eastern side— one of the four directions surrounding the Royda tree— marked out the boundaries and prepared the site for the construction of a four-cornered city. Since the city was established with the Patala tree serving as a central reference point for the four directions, and because the city was settled in the immediate vicinity of the Patala tree, it came to be known as Pataliputra. The King arrived at the site, formally established the city, and bestowed lavish donations. As that Patala tree bore an abundance of blossoms, the city acquired the popular name of Kusumapura (City of Flowers). In the very heart of that city, the King commissioned the construction of a resplendent Jain temple made of crystal— a structure as magnificent as Mount Kailash itself. Within that Jain temple, King Udayi— expending a vast fortune— ceremoniously consecrated a statue of Lord Neminath, crafted from the rare Arishta gem. By constructing a fortress, numerous Jain temples, mansions for the Shreshthis, stepwells, ordinary wells, ponds, residential quarters, and charity houses, King Udayi utilized his wealth to create a city as beautiful as the Devlok; a city wherein the principles of the Jain Dharma were deeply ingrained within all seven dhatus (every facet) of its existence. Thus did King Udayi reign for a very long period. One day, King Udayi went to visit his Guru to listen to the discourse on Dharma. Then the Guru explained Dharma in this manner:

A prosperous kingdom, excellent food, good fortune, a healthy body, a virtuous family, a beautiful wife, widespread renown, refined pleasures, the heaven, and ultimate liberation— all these are attained through Dharma.

Poverty, suffering, earning one's livelihood by serving others, a wicked nature, distressing company, loneliness, destitution, meager food, and physical ugliness— all these are the consequences of Adharma (unrighteousness).

Any soul who journeys to Shatrunjaya and pays homage to Lord Rishabhadev attains the Devlok s and ultimate liberation.

Beholding the Jineshwaras at the Shatrunjaya pilgrimage site eradicates two forms of spiritual degradation; meditating at Shatrunjaya destroys sins equivalent to a thousand Sagaropamas, while undertaking religious vows (Abhigraha) there expiates sins equivalent to one lakh Sagaropamas.

On this earth, there is nothing comparable to the Namaskar Mahamantra, no mountain comparable to Shatrunjaya, and no water comparable to that of the place of Gajendra.

He who, having touched the sacred soil of Shatrunjaya and paid homage to Mount Revatachal (Girnar), subsequently bathes in the Gajpad Kund, is liberated from the cycle of rebirth.

Upon hearing of the immense glory of Shatrunjaya, the King summoned Shri Sanghs (religious congregations) from many different countries. Then, at an auspicious moment, he set forth to pay homage to the Jineshwaras at Shatrunjaya. Along the way, at various locations, the King commissioned acts of worship, Snatra ceremonies, flag-hoisting ceremonies, and the construction of stepwells at the local Jain temples, until he finally arrived at Shatrunjaya. There, too, the King performed the Snatra worship of Lord Rishabhadev, hoisted the sacred flag, and celebrated various religious festivals. Thereafter, the King proceeded to the sacred site of Girnar, where he worshipped Lord Neminath— thereby fulfilling the true purpose of his life.

Shatrunjaya is a veritable repository of the accumulated fruits of boundless virtuous deeds. In the first era, this sacred site of Shatrunjaya was of immense magnitude; however, as spiritually evolved lokas (Bhavyalokas) subsequently drew upon its accumulated merit, Shatrunjaya has, in this current Kaliyuga (Age of Strife), diminished in its physical stature.

Subsequently, having completed his pilgrimage to both holy sites, King Udayi returned to his own city. There, too, he celebrated a Snatra festival within the Jain temple. The King commissioned the construction of numerous new Jain temples. He was deeply devoted to the Devguru; he performed Pratikraman (spiritual introspection) twice daily and offered worship to the Jin three times a day. Thus, by steadfastly practicing righteousness in this manner, the King's inner disposition flourished. Eventually, having installed his son upon the throne, King Udayi himself dedicated his remaining days to spiritual practice and, upon his passing, ascended to the heaven. From there, he will ultimately attain the state of Liberation (Moksha).

The Story of Shri Arnika-putra and King Udayi Concluded.



6. Atimuktak Muni

Even one who has committed numerous transgressions can attain the state of a Siddha (liberated soul) by engaging in sincere self-condemnation accompanied by pure sentiments— just as Muni Atimukta attained Moksha through the practice of Iriyavahi.

In the great city known as Pedhalpur, King Vijaya reigned supreme. He had a queen named Shrimati, who was steadfast in upholding virtuous conduct. Both the King and Queen were adept at practicing the Jindharna; they engaged in meritorious deeds such as charity, virtuous conduct, asceticism, spiritual contemplation, worship, the propagation of the faith, the proclamation of Amari (non-violence/protection of life), and the charitable distribution of their wealth across the seven prescribed fields of merit. For it has been said:

Those who, despite possessing meager wealth, demonstrate their full capacity and give charity in manifold ways are considered truly blessed among all benefactors.

Those who, even while enduring sickness, affliction, ego, delusion, and every form of suffering, never abandon the vows they have voluntarily undertaken, are the ones extolled and praised by the wise.

In due course, while they were thus steadfastly practicing righteousness, a son was born to them. Celebrating the child's birth with great festivity, the King bestowed upon him the name Atimuktak. When the young prince reached the age of six, while playing during his childhood days, he caught sight of Gautam Swami— who had arrived to collect Gochari (alms/food). Filled with joy, the boy bowed down in reverence and declared, "O Lord! I shall become just like you." Gautam Swami replied, "You are but a child, and Diksha (monastic initiation) is an arduous undertaking; the observance of Charitra (monastic conduct) is exceedingly difficult to sustain." As it has been stated:

Even for mature men— despite their engagement in virtuous acts such as asceticism, ritual practices, mental discipline, and humility— the observance of Charitra remains a formidable challenge. Of this, there can be no doubt.

Atimuktak, however, firmly asserted, "Even though I am but a child, I will become just like you." As Gautam Swami proceeded on his way to collect pure foods as alms, the young boy approached his parents and said, "Grant me initiation. I aspire to become like Gautam Swami." His parents asked, "Why do you speak in this manner? You are our only son; upon whom, then, will the kingdom rest? You are destined to be our support in our old age. Surely, the time for us— your parents— to take initiation has arrived, not yours." The son replied, "O Mother! Given the impermanence of existence and the absence of true spiritual insight, who can truly be called 'old' and who 'young'? Who is truly anyone's son? As souls wander through the cycle of worldly existence, they form countless relationships with one another; for it has been said:

'Neither mother, father, brother, wife, son, friend, nor the accumulation of wealth serves as a true refuge for souls in this world; only the teachings of the Jin serve as their ultimate sanctuary.'

He who is a father in one life becomes a son in another; he who is a son becomes a father; he who is a son becomes a mother; and she who is a mother becomes a son. Thus, in this world, through the interplay of karma, souls forge a multitude of relationships across countless lifetimes. Therefore, who can truly be designated as a 'son,' and who as a 'father'?"

Having thus obtained his parents' permission, Prince Atimuktak received initiation from the hands of the venerable Gautam Swami amidst a grand celebration. Diligently performing the spiritual practices prescribed by Gautam Swami, observing the vows of pure self-restraint, and maintaining a joyful heart, the young ascetic Atimuktak – afflicted by hunger one morning– went to the home of a Shresthi to seek alms. When Atimuktak Muni said Dharmalabh, the merchant's daughter-in-law laughed and asked, "O young ascetic! Why the evening (Sandhya) in the early morning?" Perplexed by this enigmatic question from the daughter-in-law, the young ascetic replied, "That which I know, I do not know." Failing to grasp the meaning of his words, she asked, "O young ascetic! What exactly did you mean?" Revealing the underlying mystery, the young ascetic replied: "In my childhood, what is the purpose behind undertaking a vow akin to the twilight hour?– this is what you asked, and to this, I replied, I know that death is inevitable, but I do not know at what age it will occur. When the 'morning' and 'evening' of this life will arrive can only be known through omniscience that I do not yet possess." With this profound intent, the young ascetic offered his reply. Upon hearing this, the daughter-in-law reflected, "Alas! This young ascetic has indeed spoken the truth." Thereupon, she undertook the twelve fundamental vows– the very roots of Samyaktva (Right Faith), which constitutes the essence of pure religion. Subsequently, the young ascetic, having accepted pure food and water, returned to the Upashraya .

Now, on one occasion during the rainy season, while playing with his childhood friends– floating his water-pot like a toy boat in a water-filled pit resembling a pond– the young ascetic Atimuktak suddenly caught sight of Gautam Swami and felt deeply ashamed. Overcome with remorse, the young ascetic proceeded to the Samavasarana (divine assembly) of Shree Vir Prabhu. There, standing before the Jagadguru, he performed the Iriyavahi Pratikramana(a ritual of atonement for transgressions committed while walking) and while chanting the words "Dagmatti, Dagmatti" to seek forgiveness from the souls inhabiting the elements of earth and water, he attained Keval Gyan through the complete eradication of all karmas. Thereupon, the Devs descended to celebrate the grand festival of the Kevali. It is said that:

"The karma that a human being cannot eradicate even over the course of millions of lifetimes through intense asceticism can be completely destroyed in a mere half-moment through the cultivation of Samata (equanimity)."

"The mind alone is the root cause of both bondage and liberation for human beings. For the sake of bondage, the mind attaches itself to sense objects; conversely, for the sake of liberation, it detaches itself from all sense objects."

Thereafter, Atimuktak Kevali traveled from country to country, city to city, and village to village, enlightening worthy souls along the way, until he finally arrived at a garden situated on the outskirts of the city of Suryapuri. There, King Jitshatru, accompanied by a multitude of people, arrived to pay his homage. After performing three circumambulations, he sat down in the front row to listen to the discourse on Dharma. Atimuktak Kevali delivered his religious instruction in the following manner:

Life is as fickle as the wind; strength and youth are as fleeting as a rainbow. Wealth is akin to the flash of lightning or the surging waves of a river cascading down a mountain. Therefore, O noble souls, having realized this truth, ever practice this unshakable Dharma.

As long as this body remains healthy, as long as old age is still distant, as long as the faculties of the senses remain intact, and as long as the span of life has not yet been exhausted— until then, wise individuals should strive earnestly for the salvation of the soul. For what kind of endeavor is it to dig a well only after one's house has already caught fire? In other words, such an effort is utterly futile.

Protecting living beings, paying homage to the Lord Jineshvara, listening to the sacred Agamas to the best of one's ability, revering the ascetics, eradicating ego, honoring and respecting the true spiritual preceptor, dispelling delusion, subduing anger, uprooting the tree of greed, purifying the mind, and bringing the horses of the senses under control— these are the means to attain liberation.

Subsequently, the King— accompanied by numerous Shravakas (devotees)— formally embraced the Dharma, undertaking the twelve vows that constitute the very foundation of Right Faith (Samyaktva). After awakening noble souls across many lands to the path of righteousness, and upon the completion of his lifespan, the young ascetic Atimuktak attained the state of ultimate liberation (Moksha).

The Story of Shri Atimuktak Kevali Concludes.



7. Nagdatt

The soul who, even amidst suffering, refrains from taking that which has not been given (i.e., another's property), consequently attains the wealth of liberation— much like Nagdatt.

In the city of Varanasi, King Jitshatru reigned. Within his kingdom lived a Shreshthi named Yagyadatt and his wife, Dhanashri. As the couple diligently practiced the religious path expounded by the Jineshwar, they were eventually blessed with a son. The parents celebrated the child's birth with great festivity and named him Nagdatt. At school, Nagdatt mastered the science of Karma, and at the religious academy, he studied the scriptures of Dharma. Upon the passing of his parents, Nagdatt, seeking to earn wealth, boarded a Sarthvah's ship and set sail for a distant island. Having amassed a considerable fortune there, he boarded the ship once again and commenced his return journey by sea in the company of the Sarthvah. Suddenly, the ship became trapped in a deep trough within the ocean waters and could not break free; panic seized everyone on board, and they began reciting mantras for peace and protection. At that moment, Nagdatt pointed out to the ship's owner that a multitude of Bharanda birds could be seen perched on a nearby mountain. He suggested that if a courageous man were to go there and startle them into flight, the powerful gusts generated by the flapping of their wings would create enough force to lift the ship out of the water. The ship's owner then asked, "Who among us possesses the strength to undertake such a task?" Overcome by fear, no one felt emboldened enough to venture forth; whereupon the ship's owner declared, "Whoever goes there shall be rewarded with one hundred gold coins."

Responding to the challenge, the courageous Nagdatt went there and reverently chanting the Namaskar Mantra startled the Bharanda birds into flight. The sea waters began to surge due to the wind generated by the flapping of wings, and amidst the rising waves, the ship emerged. The ship's owner returned to his home. Nagdatt, who had remained behind and was suffering from hunger, began to contemplate a means of escape. He reasoned: "If I succumb to hunger and die in a state of intense mental anguish, I am destined for durgati (a wretched rebirth); therefore, I shall cast myself into the water and die right now." With this thought, he leaped into the water and landed directly into the jaws of a fish. The fish, moving through the water, eventually reached the shore; when it opened its mouth, Nagdatt stepped out. He then proceeded to a nearby reservoir, drank water to refresh himself, and took a meal of fruits. Wandering from place to place, Nagdatt eventually reached his hometown and approached the Shreshthi Dhanadatt, and asked to give one hundred gold coins. However, driven by greed, Dhanadatt refused to give him the money and retorted, "Who are you? Who has ever seen you before? Why are you speaking such falsehoods?" Nagdatt replied, "If you do not give me the one hundred dinars I request, I shall report you to the King and have you punished." Dhanadatt retorted, "If you have the power, then go ahead and do as you please." Nagdatt, who held a deep

aversion to coveting others' wealth, was a man of such integrity that he would not even pick up money that someone else had accidentally dropped.

Meanwhile, Priyamitra, the caravan leader, had a daughter named Nagavasu. She was an extraordinary beauty, accomplished in all the arts; as she matured, she harbored a deep desire to marry Nagdatt. At the same time, Vasudev– the Kotwal (police chief)– sought Nagavasu's hand in marriage from Priyamitra; however, Priyamitra refused to give his daughter to him. Consequently, Nagavasu was married to Nagdatt; consumed by jealousy over this union, Vasudeva began to look for an opportunity to bring about Nagdatt's ruin.

On one occasion, while the King was out riding his horse, one of his earrings fell to the ground. Nagdatt– who had taken a solemn vow never to take anything that had not been freely given– happened to be walking nearby. Upon spotting the earring, he deliberately took a detour to avoid it; later, on the holy day of Ashtami, he retired to a forest grove to engage in the spiritual practice of Kayotsarg (meditative standing). At this moment, the Kotwal saw the earrings, he took them and placed them under a cloth near Nagdatt, who was standing in Kaussagga, to put him into trouble. While the king was searching for the jeweled earrings, Vasudev came and said to the king, "O lord! I do not know what Nagdatt bowed down and accepted while I was sitting on the highway." Then, by the king's order, servants went to find Nagdatt. While wandering, they saw Nagdatt in Kaussagga and went to him. Seeing the earrings covered with a cloth near Nagdatt, they described Nagdatt's identity to the king. The king said that anyone who commits such deceitful acts should be crucified. Then, by the king's order, to punish Nagdatt, the king's servants brought him to the slaughterhouse on a donkey to crucify him. By the time the servants crucified Nagdatta to the sound of the trumpet, the cross had become a throne. The blows were turned to ornaments. This had happened two or three times, and by the time the king arrived, Shasan Devi, attracted by Nagdatt's virtue, said, "This Nagdatta, the best among men, is fortunate because he doesn't take money from others even at the end of his life. First, Dhandatt Shresthi owed him a hundred dinars, and now Vasudev has tricked him. He doesn't accept money that is not given by others." After Shasan Devi had said this, the king placed him on the main elephant, brought him home with festivities, and honored him with immense wealth. It is said that:

"Dharma is the root of auspiciousness, it wards off all suffering and it is the root of medicine. Dharma is the source of inestimable strength, and it is worthy of being sought as a refuge.

The Dharma– manifested as non-violence, self-restraint, and asceticism– is the supreme benediction. Even the Devs pay homage to the one whose mind remains perpetually immersed in Dharma.

Subsequently, the King arranged for Dhanadatt to present him with one hundred gold coins. As Vasudeva was a wicked individual, he was banished from the kingdom; for it is said:

Through unrighteousness, a human being incurs a succession of suffering and disease, a shortened lifespan, humiliation, misfortune, and destitution.

Thereafter, having practiced the Jain Dharma for a long period and ultimately embracing initiation, Nagdatt attained Keval Gyan upon the complete eradication of all his karmas. Then, while wandering across the earth– and having enlightened the multitude of noble souls like a grove of Kumud flowers with the nectar of his words– Nagdatt, shining like the moon among the Kevalis, attained liberation.

The Story of Shri Nagdatt Concluded.



8. The Second Nagdatt

A person who does not succumb even slightly to the passions, such as anger and pride, attains liberation, just like Prince Nagdatt.

In times past, two princes became ascetics and, through the practice of penance, ascended to the heaven. While residing there, they made a pact with one another: whichever of them was the first to descend from the Devlok and be reborn in the human world, the other– still residing in heaven– would come down to the human world to spiritually awaken and guide him.

In a city named Lakshmipur lived Shreshthi named Dhanadatt. His wife's name was Devdatt. Once, desiring the birth of a son, the merchant worshipped the Serpent Deity. Pleased with his devotion, the deity declared, "You shall be blessed with a son." Meanwhile, the soul of one of the aforementioned ascetics– who had been reborn as a Dev – descended from heaven and was born as Dhanadatt's son. The father celebrated the birth with great festivity and named the child Nagdatt. As he grew, he gradually mastered the seventy-two arts. Being adept in the Gandharva arts (music and performance), he became renowned as "Gandharva Nagdatt" and developed an obsessive fascination with playing with serpents.

Meanwhile, utilizing his Avadhi Gyan (clairvoyant knowledge), the Dev – Nagdatt's former companion– perceived that his friend had fallen prey to this obsession; he therefore descended from heaven to spiritually awaken him. However, Nagdatt showed absolutely no inclination to abandon his obsession; he continued to spend his time playing with serpents.

One day, having filled a basket with serpents, Gandharva Nagdatt went to a garden with his friends to amuse himself. As he began to play with the serpents there, the Dev – having sensed his presence and assumed the guise of a Garudik (a snake-

charmer/exorcist)– approached the spot, carrying a basket filled with serpents. Upon seeing him, Nagdatt's friends exclaimed, "O Dev ! This man here is someone who plays with serpents!" Hearing this, Gandharva Nagdatt asked, "What is inside that basket of yours?" The Dev, still disguised as the Garudik, replied, "It contains serpents." Then Nagdatt said, "You play with my serpents, and I shall play with yours." Thereupon, the Dev– disguised as a Garudik– began to play with Nagdatt's serpents. Even when bitten by those serpents, the Garudik did not perish. Then, consumed by envy, the Gandharva Nagdatt declared, "Now, I shall play with your serpents." The Dev replied, "O noble soul! If my serpents were to bite you, you would surely die." Nagdatt retorted, "Release your serpents!" Upon this, the Dev– still in the guise of a Garudik– formed a circular enclosure, placed baskets filled with serpents at all the four directions, and summoning the onlookers, announced: "This Gandharva Nagdatt desires to engage in a game with my serpents. Should a serpent bite him, hold me blameless. Behold– this is the nature of my serpent."

"With eyes as red as the blazing sun, a tongue flickering like a streak of lightning, fangs laden with potent venom, and a fury as fierce as a falling meteor– such is this serpent. In this manner, this serpent is ferocious.

Any human bitten by this serpent instantly loses all sense of right and wrong, forgetting the distinction between what ought to be done and what ought not. Why do you seek to challenge this mighty serpent– a creature akin to invisible death itself?"

Possessing eight hoods that tower like the lofty peaks of Mount Meru, and two tongues; the serpent residing in the south strikes with arrogant pride.

This ruthless serpent holds no fear even for the King of Gods, Indra himself. Why, then, do you seek to challenge this mighty serpent– a creature as formidable as Mount Meru?"

"Within this basket resides a female serpent named Maya. What is her nature? Possessing a captivating allure and a frenzied, erratic movement; her hood is marked with the auspicious symbol of the Swastik. She is a serpent skilled in illusion, deceit, and trickery.

Even the most expert snake-catchers cannot capture her; once bitten by her, no antidote or medicine proves effective. Endowed with unparalleled power, she has been accumulating her venom over the course of a vast span of time and she lives in a very dense forest.

Here, in the north, is a serpent which is located in the northern part of the circular circle, is the most dangerous; its hiss is like the roar of heavy clouds. And it bites driven by greed.

Just as the ocean is never filled even when many rivers flow into it, similarly, the desires of a person inflicted by this serpent are never fulfilled. Why do you desire this serpent filled with all kinds of poison?

These four serpents of anger, pride, illusion, and greed are evil. Whoever has been bitten by them cries out like a sick person in the world.

Whoever has been bitten by these four evil, poisonous serpents surely falls into hell. They find no respite anywhere.

Saying this, the Garudik Dev released the serpents. They bit Gandharva Nagdatt, rendering him instantly unconscious. Gandharva Nagdatt's servants exclaimed, "Oh! What have you done?" The Dev replied, "I tried to stop him, but he still didn't stop. What can be done?" Nagdatt's friends tried numerous medicines, but he still didn't recover. Then Nagdatt's servants fell at the Dev's feet and pleaded, "Bring him back to life quickly." The Dev replied, "These snakes had bitten me in the same way before. By performing this ritual, I was brought back to life. If he performed the rituals I prescribed, he would surely live. If he didn't accept these rituals and follow them, he would die again." The scriptures explain this in this way:

These four evil, poisonous snakes had bitten me too. To dispel the poison, I undertake various forms of ascetic penance.

I dwell amidst mountains, forests, cremation grounds, ruins, and beneath dense trees; yet, not for a single moment do I find respite from these venomous serpents.

One should not consume excessive food, nor should one fill one's stomach solely with overly rich food. One should consume only enough food to satisfy one's hunger— and even this should not be done within the village precincts, but rather outside the village. One should take in simple, dry, and wholesome food— specifically, a diet devoid of Vigai (impure or stimulating or addictive substances).

He who eats little, speaks little, sleeps minimally, and possesses few material possessions or accoutrements— even the Devs bow down to him in reverence.

The knowledge— which, by paying homage to the Siddhas (liberated souls), serves to dispel the poison constituted by the karmic activities of mind, speech, and body— is indeed the supreme wisdom (Mahavidya) existing within this world.

I have renounced completely all acts of violence against living beings (Pranatipat), falsehood (Mrishavad), theft (Adattadan), sexual misconduct (Maithun), and attachment to material possessions (Parigrah). May you, too, resolve to do the same (Kuru Kuru Swaha)!"

Upon hearing this, the young man rose to his feet. His parents exclaimed, "Look! Our son has risen and stands on his own!" No sooner had they uttered these words than he immediately collapsed once again. The parents then implored, "Please, by whatever means possible, restore him to life!" Thereupon, the Garudik Dev revealed the details of the young man's previous incarnation; through this revelation, the youth attained Jati-smaran Gyan (knowledge of past lives) and subsequently embraced the ascetic path.

The Dev then declared: "Anger, Pride, Deceit, and Greed– these four are akin to venomous serpents. Only he who has not been bitten by these four serpents– Anger and the rest– is able to attain the Supreme State of Liberation (Moksha), situated at the very pinnacle of the universe." Nagdatt then replied, "In my past life, I, too, was afflicted by these very serpents– Anger and the rest. But now, this benevolent Dev– a friend from my previous life– has got me released from the clutches of these venomous serpents like Anger etc."

Therefore, I shall not fall under the sway of these serpents– anger etc. Upon hearing this, the Dev returned to his abode. His parents, too, returned to their respective places; and Nagdatt, having conquered the four serpents like anger etc. attained liberation through the complete eradication of all karmas.

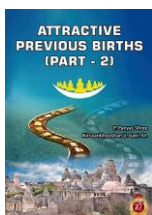
The Story of Shri Nagdatt Concludes.



Some Books Edited / Translated / Written By P. Panyas Shree Nirvaanbhooshan V. Gani M.

1.

Attractive Previous Births- Part-2



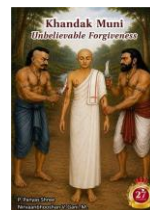
No. of pgs.: 81

Published:2026

This book is a collection of 30 previous births, explained in a lucid manner.

2.

'Khandak Muni – Unbelievable Forgiveness



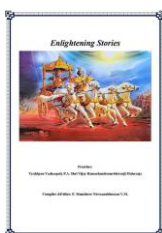
No. of pgs.: 18

Published:2026

To know the height of forgiveness, read 'Khandak Muni– Unbelievable Forgiveness

3.

Enlightening Stories



No. of pgs.: 140

This book is a collection of small stories, narrated by world's best preacher. This book will enlighten your whole life, family, nation, continent & world. How? To get this answer, read 'Enlightening Stories'.

4.

Children's Stories



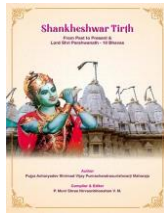
No. of pgs.: 36

Published:2025

This book will inspire children for adopting honesty, generosity, modesty, human values, etc., in their lives. How? To get this answer, read 'Children's Stories'.

5.

Shankheshwar Tirth From Past to Present & Lord Shri Parshwanath – 10 Bhavas



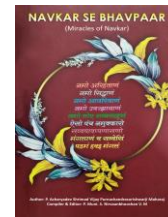
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How Krishna achieved magical idol of Lord Shri Parshwanath? Why the town was named 'Shankheshwar'? To get the answer and to know about past lives of Lord Shri Parshwanath, read this book.

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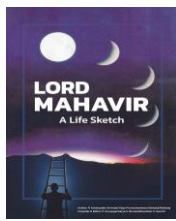
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Coming Soon

This book is a collection of 16 miraculous incidents. It will help readers to know the magical powers of 'Navkar', in their life also.

7.

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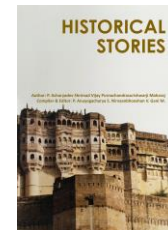
No. of pgs.: 54

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This book is a collection of the main events of 27 Bhavas of Lord Shri Mahavir swami. It will inspire new generation for adopting morality, honesty, human values and Jain religion in their lives.

8.

Historical Stories



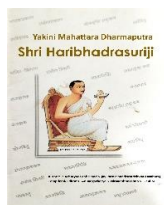
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23 historical events are depicted in a very simple and lucid style, which will inspire new generation for adopting moral values.

9.

Shri Haribhadraseriji



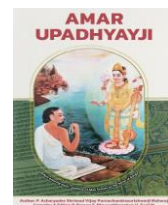
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10.

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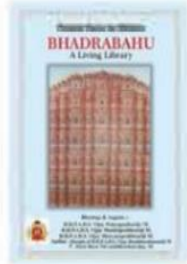


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Books



Bhadrabahu

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No. of Pages: 16

Published: 2023

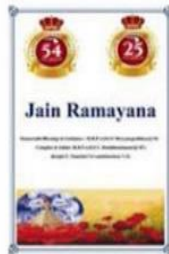


Golden Path Towards Nirvaan

This booklet explains many key terms like 'Dharma', 'Atma', 'Sin', 'Samyak Darshan', 'god', 'guru' etc., and their significance from the point of view of Jain religion.

No. of Pages: 56

Published: 2023



Jain Ramayan

(Multicolor Pictorial Story Book)

This book is a collection of small stories on different characters of the era of Lord Ram, from the perspective of Jainism. Reading this book will inculcate high moral and cultural values among the present generation.

No. of Pages: 200

Published: 2023



Maynasundari

(Multicolor Pictorial Story Book)

This story book gives knowledge of Jain values to children through interesting pictorial stories on a famous Jain character Maynasundari. Reading this book will cultivate and develop high moral values among kids and teenagers.

No. of Pages: 25

Published: 2023

Books



Chicago Prashnottar

This book Includes Questions and Answers on Jainism for the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago 7U.S.A. in 1893. It will help readers know the eternal truths of Jainism.

No. of Pages: 214

Published: 2018

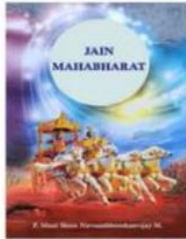


Our Great Persons

This book is a collection of small stories of great Jain persons in order to inspire new generation for adopting morality, human values, Jain religion and culture in their lives.

No. of Pages: 25

Published: 2023

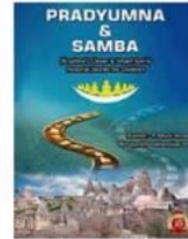


Jain Mahabharat

This book is a collection of small stories on different characters Kaurava and Pandavas, from the perspective of Jainism. Reading this book will inculcate high moral and cultural influencer for present generation.

No. of Pages: 165

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Pradyumna & Shamba

This book is all about Krishna's clever sons - Pradyumna & Shamba. Read this book to know more.

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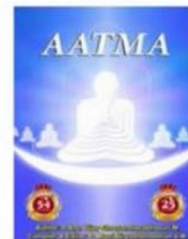


Life Changer

This book will change your life, how? To get this answer, read this book "Life Changer".

No. of Pages: 40

Published : 2024



Aatma

This book gives you knowledge in order to attain moksha (liberation), a human being must acquire self-knowledge (Atma Gyaan or Brahmajnana).

No. of Pages: 120

Coming Soon

About the Compiler

The compiler Puja **Panyas Shree Nirvaanbhooshanvijayji G. Maharaja**, before monkhood was studying in Jai-Hind college, (Mumbai), one of the top most college of India. Though staying in Walkeshwar, one of the richest areas of India, left all the comforts & luxuries, to achieve high level of spirituality. When he was a teen-ager boy, influenced by the western culture started hating, not only Indian cultures & traditions but Jain religion also. He often went to Jain upashray, just to listen & read Jain stories. This also, helped him to give up his dream of going to abroad. Stories became a turning point in his life. After becoming monk, once he was suggested by his preacher, Guru **H.H.P.A.D. Shrimadvijay Hembhushansurisaraji Maharaja**, to make his English powerful.

He was too obedient to follow each & every order of his Guru. Hence, he was given responsibility of giving 'pravachans' to children & teen-agers, during sanskar-shreni in just one year after attaining monkhood. Due to the grace of Guru-Bhagawants, he achieved mastery in English also. He gave many 'pravachans' created several poems e.t.c. in English also. He became able of compiling books & translating pravachan in English. He also helped his Guru M. in translating case papers of sammet-shikharji, Antarikshji e.t.c. He has a mastery of converting hearts of children, teen agers & young stars too. We have also experienced in our life. He brought us, near to Jainism.

We hope this story which is written in simple & lucid language, would help children, teen agers etc. to study Jainism, who are facing language barriers.

Ketanbhai (C.A.), Hemang (C.A.)
Sagar (C.A.), Jinal (C.A.)
Arham. Aarya, Vinaybhai
Devangbhai

